

2012 June Eckhart Tolle Omega Retreat New York State part 1 of 2

[Speaker 1] (0:11 - 1:20:44)

So we're here for a few days. You have arrived here with a little bit of luggage, probably not a lot because it's summertime, light luggage. But of course then there's another kind of metaphorical baggage of a different kind that you cannot let go of so easily and that's the mental baggage that every human carries around as their conditioning, conditioned mind patterns.

And wherever you go, of course, that goes with you and colors the way in which you experience your reality. And so many people find that wherever they go and whoever they meet, they tend to recreate similar life experiences. And that's because the way in which you experience life is largely determined by the conditioning of your mind.

But we are not here to improve your conditioning, to make it better so that you can function better in this world. There's nothing wrong with doing that, but this is not what this is about. This is about discovering, or for many of you, it's not discovering, it's already deepening or accelerating something that's already happening in you, discovering a dimension in you that is deeper than the conditioned mind.

And that is the core of all spiritual teachings, no matter what words they use to point to it. And that is also the core of the essence of all religion, although most religions have become burdened with all kinds of other baggage, cultural baggage, collective cultural baggage, so often you cannot perceive the essence anymore. But the essence of all that is that liberation from the conditioning of your mind.

It doesn't mean that those things, all the things that have accumulated in your mind, it does not mean that you erase your mind completely. We are not, don't need to do that, but discover something within you that is deeper and not conditioned. Whatever we want to call that dimension, it is there, all the ancient teachings and teachers point to it.

And many of you already are undergoing this process of becoming more and more rooted and established in that dimension. So you are here to deepen or to accelerate what we could call the awakening, because that's what it is. You awaken to something within you that is vaster than the personality that you think you are.

I'd like to give in our first session here, which may be a little shorter than the other sessions, but who knows? I'm not planning anything. Just a few hints and suggestions on how to use the totality of our situation here as part of this shift in consciousness, where you're no longer exclusively identified with the mind-made sense of self, that consists of continuous thinking, and it's all conditioned.

That's the baggage. So it's vital that don't just consider our sessions here as the teaching. Use the totality of the situation here, that every moment that you are here as part of the teaching and as part of your practice.

And I'll make a few suggestions in a second on how. So I mentioned the baggage that you cannot so easily let go of, that travels with you, that may come in the form of certain patterns, some very common patterns. I'll mention a few.

They may be familiar to some of you. Complaining or fault-finding, a very favorite pattern of the egoic mind, because when you complain something, who you feel yourself to be can get a little bit bigger and stronger. You put yourself in a position of superiority when you complain about another person or a situation, you immediately become superior towards that.

It's an unconscious pattern. I'm not saying do not tell people if something is wrong here in your room, and the water, the tap doesn't work, or something wrong with the mattress, and you cannot surrender to it. To point out to somebody that something needs to change, if they can do it, this is not complaining.

It's just telling people this is something, can you put that right? That's fine. Some things can be put right.

Other things, perhaps not. So please use every moment of being here to step out of the conditioned mind by, and here comes the spiritual practice, by using the present moment as a portal into a deeper state of consciousness, the unconditioned state of consciousness. So the present moment really is the device, so to speak, that you use, and the present moment has two dimensions to it, the surface dimension and the depth dimension.

First, let's talk, perhaps primarily right now, about beginning, touching the present moment, the surface dimension of the present moment, and you do that by noticing whatever there is around you in a state of alertness, alert to sense perceptions. If you become alert to sense perceptions, you are beginning to touch the surface of the present moment, and that means your attention moves into visual perception. You're truly looking at whatever it is that you are looking at, and you are truly listening to the sounds of the trees and the birds, whatever natural sounds or human sounds.

Your attention moves into perception, auditory perception. You're listening, you are looking, and behind the listening and the looking, perhaps you're also smelling the air. Perhaps you're touching things too, but the predominant senses are, of course, visual and auditory.

You are looking, and now the practice is, and don't say, don't believe your mind when it says you can't do that. You are looking without interpretation, and that's a practice. You

look at the flowers, at the sky, the tree, the grass, the totality of the landscape, or if you go for walks, which is highly recommended in nature, there are trails, and even if you travel here with friends or family members, I recommend that from time to time you take a solitary walk.

Then you move about as an aware presence through which all that beauty around you is being perceived, a state of alert presence, and as I speak about that right now, I hope that these words, that are not just words, because the words come out of that state of alert presence, which is nobody's personal achievement. It's an evolutionary shift. I have not achieved alert presence.

The me that I thought I was isn't even there when the alert presence arises, so it's nobody's achievement. And this is the arising of a deeper essence in you when the awareness comes in which the conceptual mind that otherwise takes up most of your attention, so that most people are only peripherally aware of their surroundings, they still know where they're going, they have enough awareness of that, but beyond that, most of their attention, and that's unfortunately the normal state of humans, most of their attention is continuously being absorbed by thought processes, conceptualization, mental conceptualization.

With just enough attention left to their surroundings not to bump into furniture. And sometimes even not that. And this has become so normal for millions of humans, that state of complete absorption in the conceptualizing mind, so much so that your entire sense of who you are is derived from the conceptual mind, that certain ideas which are concepts of who you are, your history and so on, that you're thinking about and telling others about.

That's why when humans use the word I, usually they refer to that mind-made entity, one could say, that consists of conceptualization, it's a conceptualized sense of self. And that sense of self is never at ease, you might have noticed, in any situation. And very quickly finds something wrong with whatever situation that self finds itself in.

And it's, oh, very quickly something comes in, and if sometimes that subsides, and you go, ah, perhaps it just happens occasionally, that you simply suddenly become a present and aware, and suddenly there's a deep sense of peace and aliveness, and that perhaps lasts for a few minutes, and then the conceptualizing mind will look for a problem, there must be something wrong here, that I can think about, and that I can make into a problem, and then I feel, and then the conceptualizing mind feels it's in control again, because when you're peaceful, it's no longer in control, it's not running your life anymore. So we are burdened with this entity. It's almost a science fiction story, but I'm not going that way.

We can come up with all kinds of theories, and they exist if you look on the internet. Theories that at some point, something, those aliens did something to humans, and

that's why we are in such a mess. That might even be true, I do not know.

What I do know, and what everybody can verify for themselves, is that the fact that we are in a mess is the case, look at human history, 20th century, if you think that there's nothing wrong with the human mind, read the history of the 20th century, as if you had never read it before, not as some familiar story, but as if you'd never read it before, let's say it's the history of another planet, and you read that, and then you read, no, this can't be true, what humans have killed in one century alone, not 100 million of their fellow humans, as it mentioned in the Power of Now, erroneously, but more closer to 180 million of their fellow humans. What?

This can't be right, it must be a misprint, it's inconceivable, in one century alone. So if you still doubt that there's a dysfunction embedded in the human mind, then you will definitely be convinced otherwise, if you read anything on 20th century history, or listen to the news tonight, or look at the lives of your relatives, a milder form of dysfunction, they perhaps don't go around with machine guns killing people, because we don't live in that time period, fortunately, unless they ascend to some country where these things are still happening right now, but most of them probably don't, but there's still a lot of really unnecessary conflict that humans generate continuously in their relationships. I call that excess baggage, when, because of their conditioned reactions, situations are blown up into drama, and we all know people who have a tendency of doing that, and some of you were there too at some point perhaps, not anymore of course.

But one needs to, the root of it is, lies in the collective mind, and you have access to the collective mind in your own mind, because there is ultimately no such thing as your own mind, your own mind is an aspect of the collective mind. So when we conceptualize reality, because our entire sense of self is derived from concepts, we lose the ability to sense the essential humanness of other humans, the essential, the essence in other humans, and we can, there's no empathy anymore, we cannot sense anymore the essential aliveness of the other. And when we have, because we have attached concepts to them, called them this or that, they have become conceptualized, of course first we have done it to ourselves, because our entire sense of self comes, whether it's a religious conceptualization, whether you call them the unbelievers and therefore they must be eliminated, or whether it's a political thing, it doesn't matter, the same pattern operates, loss of empathy, loss of the ability to have compassion towards other humans, because we live in a conceptualized reality, and then it can happen that violence towards other humans becomes so much easier, because you don't feel your essential oneness with them, you cannot feel their pain, because they are a concept in your mind. You have certain labels that you attach to them, and that's what they are to you.

But even all those humans who don't go around killing others, they also do it in a, not such an extreme form, but whenever you apply judgments to other humans and believe that your judgments are the essential reality of that, those humans, you are in some way

inflicting the same thing on them. And it's a dreadful thing to do to them and to yourself. As somebody said, when you judge others, you are really judging yourself, you get trapped in that same, in that mindset.

And this is all part of the baggage that we carry, so we need to get out of that sense of self that is derived from thinking, ideas in the head about who we are, and who others are, and that's why we are here. So, to get out of that, there are a number of portals that you just need to know that they are available, a number of portals into the, an awakened state of consciousness where you are no longer controlled by the conditioning of your mind. For a while, it may still operate, but you are no longer trapped in it because something else has arisen in you.

And whatever you want to call it, I'm going to use several pointers because I'd like to give you a choice because some pointers work better for others, certain pointers work for certain people, and other pointers work for others better. So, we begin by using the portal of the present moment, and as our spiritual practice, especially here and now, in the next two or three days, our spiritual practice is to make the present moment the focal point of our attention. And that, in the first instance, means, as I said, noticing, paying attention to sense perceptions.

And already then, you will notice a shift happening inside you, you just, as your attention moves into sense perception, listening, hearing, there must be an alertness there, otherwise you can't even be aware of sense perceptions. That alertness replaces habitual thinking. And that's already, there's already a shift, the moment you pay attention to sense perceptions, without wanting anything, it's not a want, not that you want to pluck that flower because you want to take that flower home, or you, no, just noticing, a shift happens in your consciousness, and you may notice that shift, an alertness arises, and not only an alertness, an actual, there's a stillness that comes with that alertness. And at that moment, the mind-made sense of self subsides, and something else arises, and that is, whatever we want to call that, awareness, pure consciousness, stillness, an essence, a presence, an underlying presence that was always there, but you didn't know it, because it was continuously obscured by mostly unnecessary, futile thinking, so you couldn't sense your essential beingness, which is what that is, you could not sense your essential beingness because you were trapped in the surface layers of the mind. And as I'm talking now, I hope that when I say attention, the word attention, please, this is not some new thing to believe in, attention, okay, it's all about attention, I must, I have to ask some more questions about that, then it doesn't work, it's a pointer, so attention means, oh, and being aware of sense perceptions means this, and then you notice a miraculous thing, the sense perceptions, first of all you see aliveness and beauty around you which you hadn't seen before, even in an urban environment you will see aliveness and beauty, even the man-made things are alive in some way, they are all manifestations of the play of life, so even when you are in that aware presence, when you are not interpreting, you're just letting it be, of course the

mind says, don't go there, you will lose control, this is not true, when you go there, a deeper intelligence begins to operate in your life, the conditioned mind loses control, that is true, but the unconditioned arises, but at first it seems to the human mind that you don't know anything anymore when you don't interpret all the time, and then you look at another human being without interpreting and you just look, and there's a beauty there, you don't need to call that human being anything, you don't need to judge, compartmentalise, no labelling, attaching some kind of label in order to feel secure, or immediately want something from them, or fear something, or compare yourself, is her or his body better than mine, I have to look more closely, I have to think about my body, or he looks more spiritual than me, must have been, or what's he doing here, he doesn't seem to be spiritual at all. But once you have decided on certain labels for certain people that you meet, whenever you meet that person again, the first thing that arises in your mind is those, the labels that you have already attached to them, so you're then no longer really interacting with another human, you're interacting with your mental labels, and vaguely behind that screen you still see there is another human but you can't really reach him or her, there's no true meeting anymore, there's only the conceptualised mind. So the beauty that comes with relinquishing the need, and this is our spiritual practice here, not just as we sit here, relinquishing the need to interpret, the need to label things, the need to call things something, and we can actually realise that we can be, you can be, the presence behind the sense perception.

And that alertness is a beautiful state, it is a very peaceful and alive state, a simple alert state of consciousness. And of course that's the essence of ancient teaching such as Zen is simply that, that's all there is to Zen, and people go to Zen monasteries and spend years there, can't figure it out. There was a Zen disciple in a monastery who had just spent a few years with a master and then he was going away to, back into normal, every Sunday, please give me something to remind me of the essential teaching of Zen, just please write down a few words for me to remind me.

Of course that already means he didn't get it in all those years. And so the master wrote, of course it was in Japan, so there's the symbol with the ink brush, there it is. And the disciple looks, oh, and it reads attention.

And the disciple says, okay, can you just write a little bit more please? And the master takes it back, the scroll or paper, and tries again, and the disciple reads, attention, attention. The disciple says, attention?

What does it mean, attention? I don't understand. And the master looks at him and says, attention means attention.

That's the end of the story, Zen stories are like that. You only understand them when you get the essence of Zen and then you understand the story. Attention means attention.

Ah, oh, okay, thank you, got it. And of course, some of you may be familiar with the story

which I haven't told in a long time. There was the Zen master who, whenever he was asked to explain the meaning of Zen, and again, you can't really explain the meaning, the essence of Zen, you can't explain it.

You have to get it some other way. Whenever he was asked, he became famous because whenever they asked him about to explain Zen, his teaching consisted of a raised finger. And not only a raised finger, but of course, together with the raised finger came the entire energy field of attention.

That was the answer, that's the essence of Zen. So there wasn't just the raised finger, that was the outer reality, but behind the raised finger, there was the emanation of presence or attention. So what's the meaning of Zen?

And a few people got it, and many others didn't. And of course, those who didn't said, well, did you hear my question? So this is, to be able to do that, to discover in yourself that you are able to be the present behind the perception, is a beautiful thing.

And many of you already have discovered it, and if you are new to this, some of you, look at it as an experiment. You have nothing to lose. You are welcome, of course, and quite free to go back to your normal reality when you get home, but just spending these days here, or wherever you are at home, as an experiment in consciousness, why not?

You've lived in one particular consciousness all your life, and that wasn't that great. Why not try something else, and see what that feels like, and what that does. And so, it's particularly helpful if you are in nature, of course.

If you live in a city, when you become, this becomes more deeply established in you, it's easy to do in a city, too, to perceive in that way. But initially, it's easier to perceive in this way the natural things, because they do not stimulate thought as much as the man-made things do. Man-made things tend to stimulate thinking much more.

So, if you want to be present on Madison Avenue, where I walked along the other day, for ten blocks, just perceiving all that enormous flux of energy fields, humans, cars, car horns, and it was a wonderful experience. It was simply like floating along a sea, a stream of energy, and it's actually, it's a manifestation of life, of aliveness in that particular form. And walking along Madison Avenue for ten blocks with virtually no thought in my head, the most wonderful experience.

And then back on Park Avenue, the same way. But that's a somewhat more advanced practice. Because otherwise, if you go to Madison Avenue, immediately, you are drawn into the same nervous state that most humans are in.

But of course, it's energy. It's good. It can be transformed into awakening.

There's a shorter way, probably, from the nervous state of high intensity of energy, or

the little bit mad, sometimes, or more than a little sometimes. Little bit mad, but probably easier to shift there into presence than sitting around a street corner all day long in a state of semi-sleep. As in some places that seem very relaxed, you go to some countries where it's hot and tropical or whatever.

People sit there. Everybody seems totally relaxed. And they say, oh, they must all be enlightened.

But probably they are, perhaps because of the heat, they are beginning to fall below thinking. They're not rising above thinking. So, easier than Madison Avenue is the trees.

Look at the trees and the sky and listen to the sound of the breeze and the leaves, this wonderful sound as I was walking here. Oh, there's a beauty in that. This is what poets hear and then they write about it.

This is the things that you can only notice when you are, when your attention is there. And there's no, there's no person there that imposes something on the sense perceptions. So, that is your, that is your practice.

And not only, now we come to the deeper level. When you notice sense perceptions, that I called them, you may remember I called those things the surface of the present moment. So, you're becoming, you're entering the present moment through the portal of the now.

And the now, first of all, is realized as and through sense perceptions. And then, you may also notice an essential presence that is you, without which there would be no sense perception. You notice, we, one could say your essential presence is not yours, by the way, we're just using those words temporarily.

You're sensing your essential presence not as the person, because you're not remembering your story at that moment, or your problems, because at that moment there is no problem, of course, it's only in the mind. Unless a dog runs towards you about to attack you, but that's not a problem, it's a talent and then you have to take action in the moment. You sense also the underlying, an underlying essence, or aliveness, or presence, or stillness, I'm giving you a choice of pointers, without which you wouldn't be able to perceive anything, there would be no perception.

So what it is that you sense, we could call that consciousness itself, before consciousness becomes a thought, the unconditioned consciousness, the spaciousness, the formless, the spirit, the divine spirit, the light of consciousness, Jesus called it the light, sometimes he used that expression, it's the, you are the light of the world, he said to his disciples, who were not VIPs, but simple fishermen, so he wasn't telling them that they were very special as personalities, but he said, you are the light of the world, and he's, and this is not something to believe in, or to then go to the church and repeat, you,

I am the, you are the light of the world, no, it's a pointer, that is, it's meant to you, to take you to that realization, that, what does it mean light of the world, without the light there's nothing, you wouldn't see anything. So it's not that which you perceive is lovely, but that which makes the perception possible, there's an Upanishad that actually talks about that, the ancient scripture of India, not that which you perceive, but that which makes perception possible, know that to be the eternal, and not what people here adore, not your thoughts, but that which makes thinking possible, know that to be the eternal, and not what people here adore, and so on.

What people here adore is the world of form, but that which underlies it is the formless essence, so there is an essence reality in you, and without that, you've really missed the purpose of your life in this particular incarnation, which is not that tragic on a universal level, because one incarnation is a brief consciousness moving into this particular form, and then withdrawing from the form, the one consciousness moving into all these forms, withdrawing, so if you could see a speeded up version of your life, then of course you would see you grow, and then you shrink, and then you dissolve, and that was your life. But that's the form. Now that was an attempt of consciousness to enter this dimension, and it's a wonderful thing when it does happen, and that's the purpose beyond whatever, you have a purpose of course on a personal level, also whatever life gives you to do on a personal level is fine, that needs to be honoured also, you have a function as a parent perhaps, so you have a job to do, you have a creative endeavour, you're creating something, all these are wonderful things, they need to be honoured, and also given attention to, but in themselves they are not really enough to bring you to a sense of fulfilment and true inner peace and aliveness, and knowing yourself as something far deeper than the personality, the person.

So it all then begins with sense perceptions, this is the surface of the present moment, and then the deeper dimension of the present moment is presence itself, which you sense as that which underlies sense perceptions. Let's do it right now, if you're not there already. Your entire life, of course, if you bring it down to essentials, your entire life consists of sense perceptions, thoughts and feelings, that's about it, isn't it?

So sense perception means whatever happens around you, you register it through your senses, of course, so all the events in your life and the people you relate to, you register, you know all these things through your senses, which then transmit signals to the brain, which decodes the signals, it's a miraculous process, and suddenly a world arises. So sense perceptions, thoughts, emotions become your life. Right now that means there is this room, the totality of this room, and your visual perception of this room, and the sounds that you hear, and your awareness of, you can touch your body, or you can touch the chair you're sitting on, or you can touch your hand and you can feel that, it's also sense perception.

You can breathe in, it's also sense perception, you feel the air moving in, and you may

have certain emotions right now, certain feelings, perhaps it feels good, perhaps not so good, but it's there, and certain thoughts, if you still have thoughts, that occasionally come into your head and they arise, they say something about this, where we are, where you are, there may be expectations that have not been met, because you haven't achieved enlightenment yet in the first 30 minutes, thoughts arise, and they go, and another thought comes and goes, those are all part of that which makes up your life, and it all very quickly fades and becomes something else, like a dream. Is there anything that we missed? Thoughts, sense perceptions, feelings.

How is it possible for thoughts, sense perceptions, feelings to be? Oh, there is someone there who has these thoughts, sense perceptions, and feelings, and that someone is not the person that you think you are, because the person consists of thoughts, sense perceptions, and feelings, so there is something deeper in which those arise, and that is the underlying presence. Now at this moment, can you feel yourself as that underlying presence that is deeper than thinking?

And it may be helpful, you may find that you can feel the entire, you can feel that presence in your entire energy field, the body, not the external body, but an inherent sense of aliveness that pervades the entire body, right now. Don't believe your mind when it says, oh, I can't feel that, you can, you can feel the aliveness in your hands, your arms, your feet, there is a global sense of presence, it's not just a head presence, your entire being becomes present in that, and that's a beautiful state of peace and stillness and intense aliveness, and that is the, becomes the basis for the sense of who you are, not the story in your head, not the conceptualized sense of self, but something more vital and more real, infinitely more real than the conceptualization in the head, and then the conceptualized self is fine, it goes about, it will still do things, you think things, you go about your life, talking about things, meeting people, there's nothing wrong with that, I'm not saying you get rid of it, no, but you transcend it, it still operates, actually in a less dysfunctional way, when you know who you are beyond any idea in your head, because otherwise who you are is an accumulation of ideas in your head about who you are, reinforced by other people's ideas about who you are, so it's a, this is how looking at a tree can bring you to self-realization, looking at a tree, which is beautiful in itself, in itself it's lovely, even if you don't go any deeper, it's lovely to truly perceive the aliveness and beauty all around you, which many humans miss all the time because they're too absorbed in the head, the problem making faculty in the head, so we are here then to discover or deepen that dimension in ourselves, and it begins with simple things like noticing the noises around you, the flowers, the birds, the sky, and then noticing that there's an alertness there, and a still alert presence, and in that your past becomes irrelevant in that alert presence, also whether you are young or old becomes irrelevant, it has nothing to do with that alert still presence, whether your body is, looks good or not good becomes irrelevant, whether your success or failure in the eyes of the world or in your own eyes becomes irrelevant also, whether everything you've done in your life has

been a mistake becomes irrelevant and not only that, you actually realize it wasn't a mistake, because it has brought me to this point of realization, if I hadn't made all the mistakes and made me unhappy, I wouldn't realize, I haven't realized it, I would still be immersed in the illusory reality, so that's the, my life was like that, one mistake after another and nothing really worked on the external level, because I was more concerned with being the presence, so I didn't pay that much attention to, until I started writing a book, and my relatives and particularly my mother thought I had wasted my whole life, never achieved anything, had to reach the age of 50 without achieving, almost 50 without achieving anything, and then finally, ah, a book, he wrote a book, oh that's great.

Now finally he is somebody. Now strongly linked to the attention in which you let go of labeling or if mental labeling of things happen, you just don't follow it, if a thought comes about what you are perceiving, see it's only a thought that arises and don't follow it where it wants to take you, just let it go again, and another thought may arise or they may not even arise. So you are beginning then to experience the most amazing transformation possible for humans, an evolutionary leap, one could almost say, by realizing that you are able to relate to external reality, not always having to relate to external reality through concepts, but you can also relate to external reality through awareness, and you have a choice.

When you look at another human, you can be the awareness or the presence and become still and alert and look at them and then you are truly meeting them, or you can be the person and label that other person and have certain interpretations about them and believe in them completely and then think that that is who they are. Simple people do things like somebody lies to you and then you say to your friend, he is a liar, and then you call up another friend, you know what he did, he lied to me, he is a liar. What you have done, he may have lied to you, but now you have made him into a liar and this is a big label that you stick on his head and next time you meet him, that label already obscures who that person is because you are meeting the liar.

And whenever you talk about him, you talk about him as this is a conceptualized reality. Now it's even possible that he lies continuously to everybody. It's possible some humans are like that, so you might say, well, I'm not quite, this isn't completely wrong because he lies all the time, so he is a liar.

But you are still, the fact that he lies a lot may be a true fact, but if then you create a conceptualized reality for him and call him a liar, that is where you make it impossible for you to relate to him and also in some way you prevent him from going beyond that behavior pattern because you impose it on him by your judgment. So what you now expect him to do and everybody else believes it, they all expect him to lie and he does. Humans are connected in their interactions and if you are not fully conscious, your expectations to a large extent determine people's behavior towards you and the

expectations are governed by the conceptualizing mind.

And that's why there's this story that you may have heard, there's a man sitting in a small town in a cafe, an old man, and a man approaches him and says, oh, are you a native here? You live here? Yes, and the man says, I'm thinking of moving here, do you think it's a good place to live?

And what are the people like here? And the old man says, well, what were the people like where you used to live? And the man says, well, oh, they were dreadful, they were dishonest, deceitful, full of envy and malice, I just can't stand that place anymore, I have to get out.

Okay, then the old man says, it's very much the same here. And the next day, the old man sits again in the cafe and somebody else turns up, by coincidence, and says, my wife and I are thinking of moving here because we like this town, what are the people like? And the man says, well, what were the people like where you come from?

And he says, oh, they're great, they're helpful, kind, couldn't be nicer people. And the old man says, it's very much the same here. And of course, the old man is right.

You create according to your conditioning, your conditioning to a large extent determines the way in which you experience other people and reality. And when you go beyond your conditioning, you reach a place where you give the greatest gift to other humans that you can give, and that is the gift of your pure attention. When you look at somebody and you give them attention, there's an outflow of energy towards them.

Just look, and attention means, pure attention is you're not labeling anymore, it's not, you're just looking, perceiving, and there's an outflow, perhaps they are talking to you, there's an outflow. Attention is energy, or you give attention to a child. Many parents can't do that because they're continuously saying to the child, do this, don't do that, now we must do that, get ready for this.

There's always something, there's never pure attention really. There's always something to sort out and to make better. Of course, those things have their place.

Brush your teeth, of course they need to brush their teeth, but if that's the only reality of do this, do that, come to, there's never that spaciousness which is attention, giving it to the other. And the child can feel that, if you give a child, you just look at the child and you listen to the child, or look. It's a beautiful thing, there's a flow, and then something comes back to you from the other, because ultimately attention is a form, we can almost say a form of love, in a deeper sense.

There's a giving, an outflow. Of course it's not your personal, it's not something of your personal belonging that you give, attention comes through you, it doesn't come from you, it comes through you from the Divine, the One Consciousness, and you become an

opening for that. And then the way in which you experience reality changes dramatically, a wonderful shift happens, situations are no longer, life in general is no longer perceived as hostile, it becomes helpful.

And again, when you look at a tree, or you listen to the sounds, that's the outflow of attention, and attention of course is just a word, it's a mysterious, ultimately unnameable energy that is, goes, it has no form. And you can become an opening for that, and then it begins to live through you, that essence, and express itself through you, in what form it expresses itself varies from person to person. But it begins to, it could just be that you become more, you stay where you are, become more kind, and loving, and not because you're thinking, I need to be kind and loving, that doesn't work, you can try very hard, love your neighbor as yourself, okay, I'll try.

Except that guy, and that one, when you feel that you are, something is living through you, without being obstructed anymore, it was living through you before also, but only a trickle. It's a little bit like, let's imagine you are a ripple on the surface of the ocean, and the ripple, for a moment, which is a lifetime for the ripple, forgets that it is part of the ocean, and it's only an expression, a brief expression of the totality in this particular form. And the ripple thinks, I'm a ripple, that's my life, that's my ripple life, my life, the ripple thinks that its life is its own, it doesn't know it is the ocean, and then of course the ripple becomes unhappy.

It doesn't realize that it is the ocean. But once the ripple realizes it is the ocean, and now we have to let go of this analogy, because then something happens to the ripple that would not happen to a normal ripple, that's why we let him go. It becomes a beautiful formation suddenly.

Oh, and now the ocean is expressing itself fully through that. So use every moment here, and when I say every moment, it's not entirely correct, there is no such thing as every moment, there is only this moment. Well, I've never met any other moment, I can't find any other, it's always been this moment, so in language one says every moment, or many moments, but ultimately there is no such thing, there is only the appearance of many moments, because there is always something different that arises, that changes all the time.

In the space of consciousness, things arise and subside, and arise and subside, thoughts, emotions, perceptions, experiences, come and go, and so when you only see the surface, then you think everything that arises, this is one moment that arises, and one moment that arises, and the next moment that, but of course it's not really like that, because it all arises in the present moment. Which is eternal. And the present moment, the deeper meaning of it, of course is that the present moment is consciousness itself.

That's what the real meaning of the power of now is, of what the now is, it's not what happens, the now in its deeper sense is not what happens, it's the space in which

everything happens, and that space is eternal, in other words timeless, and that space is you, in your essence. Oh, but this is not of course something to believe in, but to sense that spaciousness in you as that which underlies all perceptions and all thinking. So the shift in consciousness or the evolutionary leap in consciousness is from being exclusively identified with form, the me, the thought forms of me, to being rooted in the dimension of the formless.

So this is why I sometimes say, although again, don't believe, don't take these words as absolutely true, they are only temporary pointers, one could almost say they are two halves to who you are. And most humans only know one half, which is the form, the physical form and the psychological form, the ideas they have about themselves, the stories and so on. The one half is your form identity, the other half, which most humans don't know themselves as, is the more essential, the essence identity that is formless, that you cannot know.

The other half you can know, but the formless essence identity, you cannot know it because it is the essence through which everything is known, this is why it is sometimes called the I, the eternal I am, the timeless eternal I am. And that's why Jesus said, you cannot, the kingdom of heaven, which is the dimension of the formless, which is, kingdom means dimension, my translation of kingdom is dimension, because we don't have many kingdoms anymore, so the language is old fashioned. The kingdom of heaven is, and heaven is, now in many languages, heaven, the word heaven is the same word as the word sky, in German, in French, in Spanish, heaven is and sky are the same word.

And for that reason, when Jesus used the kingdom of heaven, Christians for many centuries, they always looked, where is it? And a Russian astronaut said, when he came back from space, I went up into the heavens and I didn't find God there. So the word can be very misleading because it becomes a place where you look for God, but the kingdom of heaven is already God, the kingdom of heaven and God are the same thing, no thing.

And heaven is, now when you look up at the sky, of course, there is a vast expanse there, a vast spaciousness, whether it's the night sky or daytime sky, a vast spaciousness. So it's the dimension of vast spaciousness, this is my translation of the kingdom of heaven, the dimension of vast spaciousness that is not, as Jesus said, it's not out here, you can't say, oh, there it is, or no, it's over here, that's my translation again. But I tell you the kingdom of heaven is within you, it's the essential dimension of who you are beyond form.

And the moment your thinking mind ceases in between two thoughts, right now, in between two thoughts, what is left of you? A spaciousness that at first seems like nothing and then you sense it is a presence and it is essentially who I am. And to live in connectedness with that and ask that as the foundation for your life that is awakened living and that's why we are here.

And as you go to bed tonight, for a few minutes, lie on your back, on your bed, in the spaciousness of presence and feel that presence with your entire body. So that you may almost find that these cells begin to tingle with presence almost, it's an aliveness. And then you begin to see that aliveness is not confined to the body, you are surrounded by that presence also, so it is within and without.

And there is no thought in that, there is no thought, there is just being it. And from there, perhaps you can go to sleep and when you wake up in the morning before you do anything else or get out of bed, again lie on your back and feel yourself as presence. And then open your eyes and look around and as you look around the room, continue to feel the energy field of presence.

That makes it easy to look without labeling anything, just pure perception. This is a little bit like a child would perceive the world where conceptualization hasn't happened yet. But there is an added dimension when you do it because you have gone through conceptualization, there is a deeper knowing now.

But this is the reason why Jesus said, you must become as little children if you want to enter the kingdom of heaven. Little children are not burdened by conceptualization, by the conceptualizing mind. Now we are not going back to the child stage, we are transcending the human stage, the intermediate stage of dysfunctional humans.

And we are becoming, we could say, fully, completely human. So far we are only going towards it, have been going towards it. Unless you become like little children, you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.

And then of course you can only understand that if you look at a one year old and look into their eyes and see, sense the consciousness that's there that has not yet been obscured by conceptualization. And it's beautiful, you go, ah, ah, because it opens something in you. When you see that, it triggers that opening in you where you can sense that in yourself.

When you go, ah, then really what happens is for a moment you join with that child in the non-conceptual state of consciousness. And of course it opens your heart in colloquial language. It opens your heart, this is what presence does, and you go, ah, and that's the beauty of it.

Even a dog can do that to you. You look into the eyes of a dog, and the tail, and you go, ah, so sweet, that sweetness of being coming through the eyes. Or a cat, and rubs itself against your legs, and you go, ah, and you can sense the being there.

And so those animals are more rooted in being still. Humans, of course, are still also in being, but they don't know it anymore. They've become externalized through the mind, and they can no longer sense their rootedness, their oneness with the one, so to speak.

So the animal, I say, the animal or anything natural has integrity that most humans don't have anymore, but they can regain it at an even deeper level. Integrity, of course, really means, translated, being one with who you are. Not being divided, split into two, and suddenly have an identity that you can be concerned about and talk about my life.

What's my, I have to think about my life now. And then you have a relationship with yourself. I hate myself, but I'm trying to love myself.

Of course, loving yourself is better than hating yourself, much better. But I would suggest there is a way beyond also loving yourself, and that is called being yourself. Because when you love yourself, there's still a duality there.

There's the self that you love, and maybe one day you don't love it. But if you are yourself, then you become an expression of love. You are one with the one, and then love, just true love flows through you.

So self-images humans have, they are problematic self-images. Hmm, me. No dog has a self-image.

No dog has a problem with self-esteem. Even the ugliest dog, in the eyes of humans, is simply in itself. It doesn't have a mental image of this is me, this is me.

But we are not regressing. We are transcending that intermediate stage of where we think we are our mind, whatever our mind tells us who we are. So, that's our essential practice.

And it's about the most, well, not about, it is the most vital and the most important thing in your so-called life. Although, of course, it's not your life at all. I'm just saying it.

It's just words. There's no such thing as your life, because you don't have it. It's not yours.

You are it. If you say you have a life, there's a duality there of you and life, which is absurd. There is no you, or let's say I, there is no I apart from life.

I can't say my life, really, although I sometimes use those words. It's colloquial language, semantics. But I, I don't, I cannot have a life.

You cannot have life. It's not your life. People think they are independent, little independent life entities with their own life.

It's, but, of course, it's not possible. You cannot have your own life. You can only be an expression of the one life moving through a temporary form.

It's obvious, isn't it, that when you say my life, or he lost his life, or I don't want to lose my life, it's all erroneous, it's created, a delusion created by conceptual, by language and

concepts that you have a life. You can't, because that would imply that there is a life and then there's you. And you have it, but what are you without life?

There is no you without life. It's an absurd duality created by conceptualization. You are life.

I am life. You are, I am, temporary brief expressions in form of the one formless essence which goes into billions of life forms on this planet alone, let alone the rest of the galaxy and other galaxies. And it moves, it becomes form, it goes into forms, billions of, and it evolves in time on this dimension, or in the essential dimension, there is no time.

And it forms, come and go. And it's all one, it's all one. So, it's quite a relief, ultimately, that your life is not yours, you are an expression of the one.

Oh, so I don't really need to worry about my life, because I don't have a life. That's right, you don't, but of course, in the world of form, you still need to do things, you need to honor that, but coming from essence, the essence then flows into the doing. And that's what this is all about.

I will leave you now to your night time practice, and we are meeting again in the now, in what we call tomorrow, which of course doesn't really exist, and you will know that it doesn't exist tomorrow morning, because I'll ask you, is this tomorrow? Hello?

[Speaker 11] (1:20:49 - 1:20:51)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (1:21:36 - 3:33:45)

Welcome back. It's the now again. I thought we were going to meet tomorrow.

No. Also welcome to those of you who are not in this room, but elsewhere on the planet. Very pleasant here outside, pleasantly cool temperature, ideal for walking.

Hard to believe that according to the weather forecast, within 48 hours, the temperature is going to go up to around low 90s or 36 centigrade. We'll see if that's true. And that'll be good practice too.

As you sit here, a good way of being here, sitting here while you listen, or even just sit, is to have part of your attention in the inner sense of aliveness of your body, the inner sense of aliveness that pervades the body. Then the temptation, or the gravitational pull of the habitual mind, lessens, and it can become for you an anchor for staying present in the now. And that's an interesting thing.

Right now, what I'm talking about and recommending to you, I'm also, of course, feeling that very strongly, as I sit here, a very powerful sense of aliveness throughout the entire

body. So some of your attention is there. There's still more than enough attention left for auditory perception, more than you need.

So you are present within, and present without. Now what is it that you sense within you? We don't really need to attach a name to it.

We can say, well, it's universal life energy. It's chi. It's the bridge between the world of form and this formless source of all life, halfway.

Whatever it is, it feels wonderful and good. To be present within, I'd like to get, when this afternoon we have our first question and answer session, some feedback from some of you to see how you're getting on with that practice. Then it becomes habitual, almost, that you are present in yourself while engaging in activities and even thinking.

You can still think and nevertheless feel that sense of aliveness within. Another wonderful benefit of that is you're not dependent on some external stimulus to make you feel alive. Because when you're not in touch with the inherent sense of aliveness, then you're up here in the upper story of the house, the loft.

You inhabit only the loft of a big building and you never venture down into the rest of the building. And up in the loft you go, OK, what can I do now? And if there's nothing, then what you can always do is think about your problems.

And if you have enough problems, as everybody does, then at least it gives you a sense of, I must still be alive because my life is full of problems. And not only that, that mind also then loves to create problems for others. And that is called drama.

Problems between two or more people is called drama. And in relationships it's often the case that couples feel there's something wrong with our relationship, we haven't had any drama in a whole week. Are we still having a relationship?

Another subtle thing on another level, it gives the egoic sense of self a sense of self-importance to have all these problems. My life is so important. I have far more problems than you.

Or as my dad used to say, whenever somebody said, I have a headache, he said, you have a headache? I've had a headache for weeks. So that puts the ego down of the other person.

Oh. And that of course is a pattern that operates in many people, not necessarily with headaches, but you have problems, let me tell you about mine. Oh.

Interesting pattern. So then of course other ways in which that self in the upper story, in the loft, seeks some kind of heightened sense of aliveness through whatever there is a grasping. What can I take in next to add to me, to give me more of a sense of fulfillment?

And so it used to be, it could be things like picking up magazines and you go. And no page is really satisfying, but maybe the next one is. Or make a totally pointless phone call.

Now that used to be like that, but nowadays of course we have, technology is much more advanced, so there are other things we can do that are even more stimulating and addictive. We can go on the internet, this vast world that suddenly opens up and go into all kinds of futile channels and oh, maybe there's more there. It used to be just changing the channels on a TV set, but we've long gone beyond that.

There's far more stimulus now for the mind that's seeking more and more stimulus. And it becomes addictive. Of course anybody who uses that thing knows through self-observation, I can feel it once I start looking at YouTube.

One thing leads to another. And another, and then there's related videos and others. Oh God.

And it's always that reaching out and I need to take in something more. Where can I get the next more? And if it's not that, then of course it's the search for some new stimulus through a new affair.

I'm looking for somebody to, so you go to a bar, well most of you don't perhaps have gone far beyond that stage. And then you look for that. It's just another search for the next thing to fulfill you.

And there's always, from the basis behind that, there's that sense, there's always that sense of unfulfillment. We could call that state not enough. Or we could call it something missing here.

And that unconscious assumption, belief of feeling something missing here, not enough, is prevalent. It's there in virtually everybody who has not gone beyond the egoic mind, who is still totally identified with the egoic mind. So underlying then your whole existence, without you knowing it, it's an unconscious underlying belief or assumption, this is not enough, I'm not enough, I can't get enough, something is missing.

You may, if you observe your own life, I'm just using those words, your life, as you know you don't have a life. We are just using words. If you observe your own life, you can, or you remember before you awakened spiritually, how it was, maybe it sometimes occasionally still is, that sense of something not right.

And it's always, of course, in the present moment that something is not right, because that's the only thing you ever have. So the permanent place where something is not right is the present moment. But the present moment happens to be the only thing there is.

That's a dreadful state to be in, of course. It's called normal. And then the civilization creates all kinds of things to perhaps obscure that feeling of not enough, to mask it, to satisfy it.

But of course it never is satisfied, because it's not to do about what is missing. It's a structure in the mind. It's not to do with content, because no matter what content you add, it's not going to be it.

There'll still be something missing. I talked to somebody who achieved enormous success in the world, became extremely wealthy, and then bought a huge mansion overlooking the Pacific Ocean. And at first it was very satisfying.

And then he realized he was beginning to spend most of his time in just two rooms out of the 35 rooms. And then he was feeling a bit lost, wandering through the other 33 rooms. Okay, is that it?

And then he had to invite people, a cocktail party. And that at first was fulfilling too, and then not another one. And it got too much too.

So maybe that huge house is not that fulfilling either. There's still something missing. And there always will be.

Because the answer is not on the level of content. Nothing that you can add to yourself is going to free you of that feeling of not enough. I am not enough.

This moment is not enough. Or another perspective on this is to say another aspect of it is there's something wrong here. That's another aspect of that feeling.

And so imagine millions of humans walking around the world with a continuous underlying sense of there's something wrong here. And of course they create a whole civilization in which there is something wrong. Because if you create out of your state of consciousness, so then awakening is the realization that the answer is not out there at all.

And some people only get there when they have all the things that they thought would be fulfilling and then realize there's still something missing, something vital missing. And so we reach the simplicity of directing our attention away from the mind and its restless movements and feel the inherent aliveness in the inner energy field. And from there we can begin to, as I pointed out yesterday, look around and actually enter the present moment with our attention without feeling that there is something missing in it.

That's an enormous advance when you can consciously inhabit the present moment without feeling this isn't enough. I'm not meant to be here. Why am I here?

I don't want to be where I am. I don't want to be with the people that I'm with. I don't

want to be doing what I'm doing.

I want to be somewhere, anywhere but here. And that is a great liberation. And you notice immediately a shift in your entire inner energy field as you feel the inherent sense of aliveness and then from there you perceive whatever is around you.

You look, you listen and you realize it's actually quite beautiful, this moment. You acknowledge it. You acknowledge the aliveness of it.

In everything, in every other human, that before humans were... What are they doing here? Or as Jean-Paul Sartre said, hell is other people.

Les autres, the others, that was the literal translation. Hell is the others. And that's again part of not feeling totally alienated from life because you are totally alienated from the present moment which is where life is.

So for the first time then suddenly actually you discover subtleties about the present moment and your surroundings that were always there but you didn't know it. You discover how satisfying it is to watch a leaf quivering on a tree, quivering in the slight breeze and you see things that before were just unimportant because you had other things on your mind. I've got other things on my mind.

I haven't got time to look at the leaves. And you see suddenly... And there's a subtle sound when hundreds of leaves on the tree go like this.

Oh, the world is alive. And it's almost as if as you come to life you can feel that not only your body is pervaded by this field of aliveness it's also externally the entire world around you is pervaded by a presence. And you can most clearly feel that when you're out in nature.

And when you're very advanced in your present moment ability to inhabit the present moment fully you can even sense it in the city. But let's wait with that. Let's put that aside for a moment.

So in nature, in other words, you discover something that for many humans makes no sense at all that we could call sacredness. There is a dimension there that you acknowledge. There is a presence there that is not separate from your own presence but it is...

All the things you see or hear are an expression of that aliveness that which inhabits the forms. And so... Oh, suddenly the mind has stopped.

Oh no, it wasn't the mind, it was the air conditioning. And we never even knew that that noise was there until it stopped. So many humans, they live with this...

The mind never stops. They don't even know that they have this voice in their head that

never stops talking until something happens and suddenly they go... Oh!

Oh, and suddenly they really look at something or someone and they're fully there. And suddenly they go, Oh, this is how pleasant life can actually be. And nothing has changed externally.

So that's... The present moment practice then brings about a shift in consciousness. And you notice the sacredness that otherwise is just a concept.

Sacred? What do you mean by sacred, says the mind. Sacred?

What is that sacred? Can you define it? And of course, no matter how you define it, that still is not it.

It's like writing a PhD about honey and never having tasted it. So I'm sure there are learned PhDs about sacredness, holiness, the holy. But whether the author actually has tasted it, I don't know.

And it's so immediate that I usually avoid language that is too religious because most religious terms have been used for so many centuries and misused and misunderstood that they are burdened with all these misunderstandings and distortions. But I'll just say it. There's a sense of a sacred presence that is both within and without.

You can only get that when the mind becomes still and an alertness arises instead of the mental noise. The alertness takes the place of the mental noise. And then you feel something that is beyond concepts or words.

There is a presence there, both within and without, of which you are an inseparable part, not an otherness. A presence of which you are an inseparable part, and yet a presence that is vast. And to feel your connectedness with that, and connectedness, again, is not even the right word because it's your oneness with it, that liberates you from the sense of not enough or something missing.

Because when you sense the presence, which I sometimes call your own presence, but of course it's not your own, there's nothing that's your own. When you sense the presence, that frees you from the habitual dissatisfaction of the mind, the mental, the mind-made sense of self. And you become also, of course it frees you from the egoic self, and you become simple and present.

And something arises that is sometimes called, or an acknowledgement of that sacred presence, that you find both in the forms that you see, but also formless, a formless presence, but it shines also through the life forms that you see all around you. And the acknowledgement of that, one could call that, because you may have heard, you may practice, have practiced, be practicing in your life, the very important thing called gratitude. And that is really, in a deeper or wider sense, the acknowledgement of that,

the sacredness of the present moment, is an act of gratitude also.

And even if you're a Buddhist who says, well a Buddhist asked me, well gratitude, I don't believe in a god, some entity there, Buddhists don't, but so who am I grateful to if I have gratitude, if I don't believe in a god? Who am I grateful to? You don't need to be grateful to, gratefulness can be a state of consciousness that does not require an object that says, I'm grateful to you, that is just appreciation of the beauty and sacredness of life.

And that is really great, that appreciation, that acknowledgement, is really gratefulness also. So you don't need to say, I'm grateful to you. Of course, and if you do believe in god, the important thing is that the belief becomes an actual realization that ultimately, there is a place where you and god merge.

And you are not separate from the one. You're an aspect of the one. And even as we talk now, I can still feel the aliveness in the inner energy field.

When you're walking in nature, here or wherever, walking is a very helpful thing because you can only take one step at a time. So you can have some of your attention on the step you're taking at this moment, still capable of reaching your destination. When you pay attention to the step you're taking at this moment doesn't mean you lose your ability to reach your destination because you forget where you're going, because there's only one step.

It means the focus of your attention is on the step you're taking now. You may not be able to feel the inner body so much when you're moving, but your attention can be on the movement. So you feel there can be, again, a sacredness.

Now let's change the term. Equality. When a movement that your body performs is imbued with consciousness, with presence, when you are present in the movement, there is a sense of, for lack of a better word, or maybe it is a good word, quality in the movement that you perform.

And this you can only observe in yourself when the mind is somewhere else. You need to reach the next moment, which is so more important than this one, and the mind is trying to get there. And in the meantime you are moving, or performing some kind of work that you need to get to.

Lack of quality. Now, if you compare that with movement that are imbued with presence, then the walking, and not even necessarily much slower than before, you can even walk faster, and there can still be presence, but there's a presence in every step, in every movement. You can pack your suitcase, let's say you're running late, and you have to go to the airport, and you're not fully packed yet, usually that would be a very stressful thing, because your mind says, I need to be at the airport already, but I'm still packing here, and all kinds of stress arises, the mental projection of future, and you don't really

want to be here, you want to be there.

And if anything like that happens, you can actually practice, you can still, can I be present even now, even in that situation, with every movement, rather than projecting myself mentally, and then your attention is on, and you're actually beginning to enjoy the high energy of that, you're moving actually fast, but without the mental projection away from the present moment. That means you're still moving without stress, at the same speed as you would be moving under enormous stress. So you do not become less effective, or so slow that you'll immediately be fired from your job, or you can't reach, you don't get anywhere anymore in time, you're so present that you never look at your watch again, and you miss every appointment, it's not like that.

I'm usually on time, I love to be on time, and I wear a watch, people say, you wear a watch? I thought, there's nothing wrong with the practical aspect of time, it makes life easier, we're talking about the psychological time. So, there it comes, and then you close the suitcase, and then you run to the car or the taxi, and still present, enjoy the high energy of that moment, and whether or not you catch the plane is not that important anymore.

If you miss it, at least you feel alive. So, you miss the plane, and you sit somewhere else, instead of sitting on the plane, you sit in the airport seat. You always either sit, stand or walk somewhere, does it really matter where?

It's only the mind that tells you, I should be somewhere else. So, that comes then, we go from sensing the sacred presence, within and without, to gratitude, to not projecting yourself away from the present moment into the future, and nevertheless, be capable of performing, and performing more beautifully, whatever it is that you're performing, any action that you take, a sense of quality, comes into your life. And sometimes you can sense the quality in an object that has been made by a human in that state of consciousness of attention, where it wasn't rushed, it wasn't machine made on the conveyor, there was a human being who paid attention to the making of this object, there was presence, and sometimes an object can be imbued with a sense of quality that humans can feel because of the way, of the energy that went into the making of it. But more important than, of course, than anything you make is that energy field itself. So that quality of life is related very strongly to your state of consciousness, not so much to the external things of your life.

And so, you may remember, I believe I mentioned in the Power of Now, every human has a life situation and also there's a life situation and there's life. And we are here to go deeply into, to discover, to go deeply into the life that you are so that, this is another aspect of this vital realization so that the life that you are, the consciousness that you are is not continuously obscured by your life situation. There needs to be a balance in your life, your life, not to be taken too literally, there needs to be a balance in your life

between your life situation and your ability to be present as life.

Now, life situation, everybody has one. Life situation, I have a life situation, you have a life situation. What is it?

What are the ingredients of a life situation? The ingredients of a life situation are where you live, your home circumstances, your work situation, your financial situation, your health situation, your relationships, the general, the work that you do, I mentioned that already, the sense of purpose in what you do. So, basically then, health, finances, relationships, home situation, your life situation.

And, for many people, of course, life situation is something problematic. It's, is it working for me? And it's very rare that it actually works totally smoothly for too long.

There's always things that creep in there that, where there was, there's order for a moment and everything is fine in my life situation. There are probably not that many humans who can say that everything is perfectly fine in my life situation. It's not, it's not the nature of life situations to be totally, totally harmonious.

You can try, it's good to try to, of course, it's likely to become more harmonious as you become present. Nevertheless, most humans are then burdened. There is, all they ever, your entire, your life situation absorbs your entire attention.

And this is the case for many humans. Their finances, their relationships, their health, whatever may be the main thing at this time. And often it happens, your finances improve and then there's something goes wrong with your health.

Your health improves and then relationship breaks down. Somebody has a great success your, your, your son, your daughter has had a great success but the other one, dreadful failure. They see ups and downs.

And so, most people believe they need to continuously dwell on those, on their life situation and they don't even know that there is anything else. It absorbs all these aspects of their life situation, absorb conflict situation between people, whatever is happening there absorbs their attention almost the entire time except when they become too tired to think about it. But that's, those are short moments in between wakefulness and sleep when for a little while you become free simply because you're moving towards sleep.

And that can be quite nice but that's not where we are going here. Okay, I can't remember all my problems anymore. Just one more drink and I'll be free of my problems.

And to some extent it's true but the next drink after that you, you lose consciousness. Well, maybe two or three after that. So, realizing of course you have a life situation and of course a life situation is a life situation which requires your attention but the attention

that it mainly requires is when things that pertain to your life situation need to be dealt with in the present moment.

But for your life situation to occupy your entire, the entire workings of your mind for all your waking hours that means you are missing out on the most vital dimension of life which is to feel the aliveness of life. To feel yourself as life. So you have the dimension of life which is inseparable from the present moment and you have the dimension of the life situation which involves past and future in other words the mind.

So where your life situation exists ultimately is in the mind. It is, that's where it is kept alive. Without that all you would ever have to deal with is whatever arises in the present moment.

But as the shift happens you are no longer, your attention is no longer continuously absorbed by your life situation and you are able to step out of that which is the mind and into the present moment and that's life. Life is now, your life situation is past and future in the mind. That's because that's where past and future exist.

I haven't found any past and future elsewhere except in the mind. Even if you go to ancient Greece and see the ruins of the temples it's still the now. And when they were built it was the now and when we see them it's in the now.

So even, so past and future are in the mind that's obvious and then there is the present moment. Oh and attention to the present moment takes you out of being trapped in your life situation takes your attention out of the life situation and connects you with the inherent aliveness of life itself. And that by the way as a byproduct of that is that it adds enormously to your ability to deal effectively with the things that pertain to your life situation that you need to deal with when the time comes which is always the present moment.

So you become much more effective when you when you get in touch with the vertical dimension which is the present moment so that your entire attention is not continuously absorbed by the horizontal dimension which is where your life situation exists in past and future. You remember the past? Okay that wasn't too good but I can still I can still look here.

Oh promise of fulfillment here. But if you took look too long to the to here which is the future if you look too long the promise of fulfillment can suddenly become the monster. Oh dear what's going to happen to me?

Well you're going to die. So horizontal dimension you can see how how superficial in a deeper sense a deeper sense of superficial how how superficial your life is when you live only in past and past and future trapped in your life situation. The vertical dimension is missing the depth is missing which the depth can only be accessed by moving your

attention into the present moment and suddenly the life situation subsides and you realize this there's far greater vitality in this moment than anything I can find in my life situation.

So it frees you from this trap of exclusively dwelling on your life situation and identifying with it and deriving your sense of self from your life situation which may be satisfying for a while I did well people admire me okay for a while but who knows what they say about you tomorrow Oh now they don't like me anymore whatever it is enter the vertical dimension if that's missing no matter what you do you are dissatisfied the sense of not enough remains something missing remains and it's frustrating it's just so frustrating to live only on a horizontal dimension of life why does nobody teach the children at school not to lose themselves in the horizontal dimension of course I wouldn't call it that to children find another term but the most vital knowledge should be that life has a dimension of depth which is now which is vital this is where the inherent intelligence behind all life is accessed this is where all creativity comes from by accessing the vertical dimension which means for a moment the mind becomes still but an alertness remains and there opens up the present moment the depths of the present moment Oh and you're not thinking at that moment of yourself as a person you're not remembering all the problems and dilemmas that make up your life situation but it is not you're not evading the mind will tell you if you go into the present moment you are evading your problems you need to think about them because the more you think about them the more likely you are to find some solution and eventually you'll be able to solve all your problems just think about it more of course that doesn't work you can many of you have been there have tried that when the time comes a situation can be addressed and a situation is there okay now I need to go my wife is taking me to court I'm taking an example of a problematic life situation she wants all my money and so you're on your way to see the lawyer but even on your way to the lawyer you can you can enter as you're travelling there you become alert and present and you look at the sky and the trees and you feel yourself breathing and you feel an inherent sense of aliveness you acknowledge the beauty around you and then when you sit in front of him you say okay what can we do well and even as you talk to him you can feel the inner sense of aliveness and you're rooted in in presence of being you are the presence and the presence looks at the situation it faces the situation this looking is not just a visual looking it's an outflow of attention towards whatever situation arises there now what is what are the possibilities here what can we do and you can deal with things without the egoic involvement which says that bitch she wants all my money that draws you into and you deal with it and you don't make her into an enemy simply that's what she does okay that she wants okay I have one million in the bank and she wants three million okay let's deal with it what can we do here that that it's not it becomes specific when you can deal with it through the personality or the conditioned mind you can deal with the situation or you can deal with the situation this is of course the next step in presence living presence practice the first step is you're looking at the trees a more advanced step which we are

going to now is being in the lawyer's office but when you can see it working there it's an amazing thing to be able to look at a situation that would normally be called problematic in some sense you could say it is problematic and yet you look at it and you can feel the power of your attention that you're directing towards it and primarily that attention in the first place is not conceptual you don't immediately say oh we have to do this or we can do that before any concept arises or any realization of what best course of action is before that arises there is a pure field of attention directed towards the situation and that is where the power lies when you can look at whatever the situation is you look and I'm using look in a wider sense not just through eyes looking meaning the outflow of pure attention or consciousness in the same way that before you looked at a tree and felt its aliveness and your own aliveness at the same time and therefore your oneness with it no longer the separation in the same way you now look at the situation in your lawyer's office and you feel the same energy flow but perhaps you feel it even more strongly because that situation may demand a more intense presence than the non-demanding tree the tree is offering itself to you and says please perceive me acknowledge me give me your attention see my beauty because when you perceive me acknowledge me nature is I get that sense it's a very strongly that nature has been waiting for to be acknowledged by humans and appreciated by humans for a long time and now something it completes itself it knows itself and its own beauty and sacredness when a human comes and looks at that tree or that flower it responds that's a an almost poetic way but I very strongly feel the reality of that and you may also sense that as you bring your attention to nature and now let's return to the lawyer's office so that the nature is not is not is more it actually as I said it loves your attention and now in the lawyer's office the situation requires a more intense presence because you are faced with the human mind in its and if you're in the lawyer's office you're probably faced with a human mind in its unconscious state or fearful state and that requires intense presence and you may find as you as presence operates more and more in your life in certain situations the presence that comes through you intensifies and those tend to be challenging situations when you're not when presence is not yet fully flowing it can easily happen that a challenging situation a difficult human a difficult situation even just missing your plane or being delayed in traffic can bring about a reversal into complete reactive unconsciousness until presence is more fully alive in you when a challenge makes you more present until that happens a challenge tends to pull you into unconscious reaction so find the ability in yourself to direct attention towards a situation and feel the power that is you still feel the inner body and feel the power that is in that outflow of attention and then you're still in that you're looking you're listening to the lawyer she wants that she's talking okay hmm and then suddenly you find your mind starts to operate but now the mind is linked into presence and you start saying something and it's absolutely clear and say well these are the possibilities I can do this I'm prepared to do that I wouldn't be prepared to do that let's tell her these things write it down please that I can do that I can't do and it's absolutely clear and you have not gone into judgment and making enemies just dealing there are some people who are very effective in the world who

somehow perhaps they've learned this lesson in other lifetimes they deal with things in that way not many but some I've met a few who deal with things in that non-egoic which is what it is totally non-egoic way they don't regard a challenge as a personal attack on them and of course the ego regards anything that goes wrong as a personal attack even sometimes bad weather gets angry about it and definitely a traffic jam in other drivers they personally they are these drivers they are actually their purpose is to annoy me I regard it as a personal attack on me that's how the ego sees other drivers but when you drive non-egoically somebody cutting you off or whatever on the freeway there's no you just take action whatever action is required in that moment you take it it's just as if a wind were suddenly blowing towards your car a strong wind unless your ego is massive you wouldn't get angry with the wind but an unconscious human is just like that it's a natural force and so why get angry there's really nobody there he doesn't know who you are you don't know who he is and so how you behave in traffic is already one of the many ways in which you can judge your progress on the spiritual path so attention the directing of attention onto anything specific become familiar with what attention feels like what it what that is and that it is the most vital part of who you are and most humans don't even know that it exists in them that the potential exists in them it is the most vital part of who you are and at the same time far transcends who you are as this person and that's the beauty of it that the what we call attention or pure consciousness comes from a source far deeper than you as this person so you are then connected to that deeper source of life or aliveness and that is the end also of conducting your life in a state of fear it's only when you are not connected to that then of course life is fearful and threatening and every situation and every challenge is threatening and it's a dreadful way to live so that is the power of attention that we become familiar with here when we are not being challenged so that when we are being challenged it can be there also and we can deal with life by accessing in ourselves the vertical dimension and living from the dimension of depth and it all starts with little things like walking around consciously perceiving things being in the present moment choosing the present moment rather than choosing to be in useless thinking a great help then always to remember feeling the inner body when especially when you are sitting or lying somewhere it's easy to do feel it now and at the same time perceive practice is when you are talking to somebody in the dining hall for example when you are listening to people talking while you are listening feel the inner body so that you don't get lost in your mental reactions it happens so easily so you and even meditators who have a compartment in their lives that's their meditation and then they meet people over lunch and then they go totally go off into especially arguing about who is right and your perspectives and beliefs and mental positions and likes and dislikes which are very strong so if you can listen to humans and feel the aliveness within that keeps you present when you are moving then the movement itself can become an anchor for presence the step you are taking at this moment and then you can sense get the sense of quality in every step or whatever action you perform with your hands and then another wonderful access point or portal is simply to be aware that you are breathing that also takes your attention away from futile

thinking and you are just sensing I call it one conscious breath you feel the air flowing in to the body and you feel the air flowing out of the body just one conscious breath opens up an inner space where you are not thinking because while you are observing how the air observing not visually but just sensing how the air flows into the body and then out of the body while that happens when you are truly your attention has to move there otherwise you can't be aware of your breathing just one breath one breath is the in breath and the out breath that's one breath and taking one breath a conscious breath maybe just two or three times in an hour which is not very much at all will bring in little pockets of spaciousness into your life that presence in other words because while your attention is on the breath it is not on thinking so while your attention is on the breath you go into the vertical dimension it brings in and to do that let's say twenty thirty times during the day which is still very little is probably more effective than meditating as a separate compartment in your life for half an hour or an hour every morning but if you can do both that's wonderful of course if you can have both the meditation and those what I call those mini meditations throughout the day but the mini meditations where you bring presence into your life only for a few seconds have more transformative power than the compartments set aside for meditation and then do not flow into everyday life so just a conscious breath this goes back thousands of years to the Buddha and perhaps even before the Buddha the Buddha's teaching nobody knows exactly what exactly he taught the scriptures we don't know exactly which of the scriptures actually do go back to the Buddha but it seems very likely that that was one of the main methods that he recommended to be aware of your breathing now that in itself can become part of a meditation technique and that is a different matter when you set aside 10 minutes 20 minutes and while you sit you your main activity then is to be aware of your breaths flowing in and out that's very calming too and it opens up space you surrender to the breaths and my recommendation is use it throughout your daily life have little pointers in different parts where you work where you live in the bathroom have a little pointer that may be a symbol for breath whatever symbol you choose that reminds you to take one conscious breath and you may love it so much that you may even take two conscious breaths and you can also associate taking a conscious breath with certain routine activities brief activities that you do and while you are engaged in those brief activities you are at the same time putting your attention on your breath if you have an elevator that you use during the day a few times at home or in the office while you are in it going up or down while you are waiting for it you press the button why be immersed in your life situation while you are standing there what are you going to add to your life situation thinking about it waiting for the elevator why not enter the vertical dimension and access the inner space and take conscious breaths until it arrives and then you step in and then why not continue until you get either up or down and there it is and why not associate getting into your car closing the door and taking why not two or three conscious breaths before you start the engine how much time do you lose in that twenty seconds thirty seconds you can't afford to lose thirty seconds for conscious breaths I don't think so but the mind may tell you that not now I have to get thirty seconds to

haven't got time for presents now that's tough I've got things on my mind I've got so you close the door and so if that becomes habitual then many routine activities have an added dimension to them and they are no longer routine they actually take you deeper many years ago when I lived in England they started they introduced compulsory seatbelt wearing so they had to come up with an advertising slogan to remind people that they have to use their seatbelts now and so what they came up with is the slogan was clunk click every trip clunk is the door the noise of the car door clunk click is the noise of the seatbelt clunk click every trip and that's how people in England remember to put on their seatbelts and here you can have a similar slogan clunk whatever I don't know what but it means it's the association of something that you do all the time with something else so you go clunk breeze and taking just the if this were the only thing in your life of the only spiritual practice throughout the day remembering to take conscious breaths especially associating the conscious breaths with certain routine activities if that were the only spiritual practice it would be enough to transform your life because it would bring in spaciousness and so your daily life would become interspersed with presence with moments of presence and then as your daily life becomes interspersed with presence then that grows to it and you find after a while it's no longer just tiny pockets of presence presence then tends to grow into larger pockets until it's no longer a pocket there's a vast space opens up and then you begin to live in that dimension or rather that dimension begins to live through you and it's not so much sometimes from the egoic point of view it looks okay I have now access to this vast power I can become powerful here there's a secret here well this is not entirely untrue but as presence moves into your life it may well be that your initial impulse in some cases is that you want to become more effective and powerful it's true that you become much more effective and creative as presence comes in but whatever it is that initially gave you the motivation to seek presence to embrace presence to invite presence into your life whatever that is you may find that changes as presence moves into your life more powerfully and then presence has its own purposes for you it's not that you are you are the one who is using presence presence begins to use you because as you this form it flows through you and then suddenly what it is that you want in life changes completely because what it is that you want is no longer what you want it's what presence wants but ultimately it is what you want because you are the presence something to be aware of that is another habitual tendency of the human mind is a very all this is very closely related of course the habitual mind always anything that it does anything that you do through the habitual mind is really is always a means to an end because anything you do either whatever writing doing something on the computer going from here to there cleaning something wiping the table getting dressed but really the attention is always on the next moment I want to be dressed while I'm getting dressed I'm really elsewhere already and while I'm traveling to work I don't want to be traveling to work I want to be at my workplace I don't want to be going to the store I want to be already at the store so it's every movement is in the service of the next one the next moment and that is you need to be aware of that so that the pattern that is so prevalent does not take you over again and again it is a

mental pattern that we all inherit the collective mind has that pattern and that is reducing the precious present moment instead of acknowledging it honoring it giving it your full attention the egoic mind reduces it to a means to an end the end being the moment that it wants to get to which of course only exists as a thought in your head so and this is part of the trap of living in a conceptualizing mind you're living for some thought in your head which you call the next moment that I need to get to you have to be very alert so that when that pattern comes in you catch yourself and say oh where is the present moment here am I reducing this moment to a means to an end and then you give your attention to this moment rather than where you want to get to and with that comes the power and the quality again is back there it is and then the next time you do something again the old pattern asserts itself it's always I need to get I need to get there and there's always I'm now acting out so that I don't you can see what that state of consciousness is like I need to get there whether there is somewhere else in space or somewhere else in time doesn't matter it's the next thing while I'm doing this I really want to be there so a frustrating way to live and what you do is not effective at all because your attention is not fully in it so that can be read undone so that you know where you want to get to of course you do and yet your fullest attention is on the doing so observe yourself when you when you make the present moment into a means to an end reduce it to a means to an end it's a very common pattern you may find even as presence arises you may find that that pattern still comes in from time to time but recognizing it is helpful because then you suddenly can say oh okay let's give the attention to this moment because that's all there ever is and then your attention moves into this moment any conscious breath as we said will take you there also immediately puts you back into presence any time you feel your inner body you're back there you're back in presence and then of course another habitual pattern is which is even more unconscious than making the present moment into a means to an end is to make the present moment into an enemy you intensely dislike where you are who you are with or what you're doing and you're doing it the dislike the unpleasantness flows into what you do and anybody you speak to the words that you speak are full of that the negative energy that you feel about what you're doing you hate you don't want to be here some people live like that almost all the time I've seen people in information offices people who are there their job is to give information at airports or stations and some of them they regard every question that somebody is asking as a personal insult and I've seen others who are absolutely present give your fullest attention and everybody who asks them a question feels better afterwards not only because they were given the right information but also because their being was acknowledged it doesn't happen often but I've met people like that also in jobs like let's say waiter waitresses waiters there are some who embody in their work presence when they put the fork or the knife on their table they go they don't go now it tends those are the waiters that tend to work in better restaurants and if you if you work at at Denny's and you go like that then it wouldn't be long before somebody notices you and says do you want to work for me and it's a wonderful thing when you when somebody in a service capacity uses it uses presence in

the service then that presence flows into what they do and they spread presence everybody who comes into contact with them feels that quality that surrounds them and that flows into everything that they do so the way you of the person in front of you, is not made into a means to an end, which means that again, here we have the outflow of fullest attention towards that person.

And you give the information and all that you feel is secondary to the flow of attention between you and that person. And when the attention is directed, that awakens something and the attention always involves, always involves a spaciousness. In when you look and listen, there's not just the looking and the listening.

There is the energy field behind that perception. And it's not thinking. It's not to do with thoughts.

The energy field has no thought in it. It is pure awareness, pure presence. And so when you look and listen to the other person, there is not, there's far more to it than the visual perception and the auditory perception.

There is the flow of consciousness. And that is the most wonderful thing you can give to another human. You're giving of life essence to the other.

And that awakens life essence in the other. Sometimes it happens. And the other person may not know that this is what is happening or the other person feels as they like you very much.

They like to be in your presence and they don't know why. He's such a lovely person. And they feel good around you.

And if the client feels good around you, he is of course much more likely to sign. But the attention must not be used as a means to an end. You're not giving attention so that he signs because then you're fooling yourself.

It's not the real thing. The full attention is not a means to an end. It cannot be.

It's pure presence. And it is so enjoyable. You're not even thinking that you could make it into a means to an end.

It's so enjoyable to give attention. And you can use that in whatever job you're doing right now, even if you're dissatisfied with the job you're doing. In the meantime, while you're still doing it, maybe you are looking for something else.

That's fine. But if you're still doing it, you might as well, while you're doing it, give it your fullest attention. And if it's a job that you cannot possibly do it in that job, let's see, what kind of a job would it be that you cannot give your fullest attention?

I don't know. There might be some, you may be in a totally insane work environment

where everybody's close to a nervous breakdown and everybody's screaming at each other. You could still be there as the Buddha and sing.

But those places don't want Buddhas, so luckily you would probably get sacked. So some places will eject you as you become, as you give your fullest attention. Those are the insane, totally insane places.

Because insanity cannot tolerate sanity. It would threaten it. But in many places, you can transform, not necessarily what you do while you're doing it, but how you do what you do, which is always more vital than what you do.

How you do it, how means what state of consciousness do you bring to it. And so even if you work at a diner, you can give attention to everybody and acknowledge their being and have that spaciousness in the moment when you, what would you like? And one coffee?

Okay, I'll get you coffee. There was, there's a, that's love too. That is really a deeper love, not the egoic love.

There is a, you'll love that person. And although that person may be, the personality may be rough and unpleasant and, but you, when you're not judging through the mind, you give them space. Give them space to be rough and unpleasant.

Okay, good, I'll get you. Coffee is not hot enough, I want another one. Okay, good, I'll get you another one.

And they become very perplexed because of your lack of reaction. There's a saying, and I don't know which spirit tradition it is, treat everybody who comes to you as a noble guest. How would you receive a noble guest?

I don't know who would be a noble guest. Well, noble, we think in terms of nobility, but noble means something else. So you give them, this is the, yeah.

You would, how would you receive, well, noble would, let's say the Queen of England came to you. I don't know, if you like her, you'd say, please come in, sit down. Perhaps you would be more likely to give her attention than an ordinary human, but that is absurd to differentiate.

The egoic mind, of course, demands certain things from people, and it doesn't, the egoic mind doesn't get what it wants. I remember my dad who had a big ego. Later in his life, some chunks of his big ego broke off, and some awakening came through in certain areas of his life, and it was wonderful to see.

And other chunks didn't break off and remained. So in his next lifetime, the remaining chunks will break off. He went to visit a colleague at work when he was still working for

dinner.

And when he arrived, the colleague was wearing slippers. And my dad, who had a big ego, said, he received me with his slippers on. If I had been the Pope, would he be wearing his slippers?

And probably not, I think. So he saw it as an affront, his dignity felt injured, and he never went to see him again. That is an ego reaction.

But of course, everybody wants, is longing to be acknowledged in their being. Now, it doesn't have to be through wearing shoes instead of slippers, but really what they want is to be acknowledged and to be given that attention so that in that pure attention, you acknowledge their being beyond the personality. On the ego level, of course, the ego wants other things.

It wants to be superior to you, or it fears you, or it wants to be made bigger through this or that. But there's something deeper in every human that needed to be recognized in their being. And when it does happen, they love it, and you love it.

And you're both joined then in that energy field of presence that unites you. There's a common energy field in which who you are transcends whatever you are dealing with on the surface of life, the business, whatever. Who you are transcends that, and it also transcends who you are as personalities, and something deeper emerges.

And then two people could meet from totally different worlds in that way. You could meet somebody from a totally different culture and you meet, and if there's that flow of attention, all those differences would become irrelevant and you would feel your heart opens and there's a coming together of the two. All the cultural differences would subside at that moment.

Or you can meet somebody who is perhaps from your own culture, but a totally different level of education or background. Well, in England, for example, you still have less so than it used to be, but to some extent, you still have class, these social class differences. And some people are only comfortable with their own class.

So you may be the working class or you are the upper middle class, and the accent, the way you speak, will immediately tell people what class you belong to. And again, as you meet somebody in that flow of attention, that becomes totally irrelevant. With every human, you feel the oneness, no matter what the surface differences are.

Everything is transcended. Everything in the world of form is transcended. And so that is, of course, how different cultures can live together.

If enough humans can access that dimension in them, the differences don't matter anymore. Something that is far more vital can be there, and that is what matters. So

your practice is whatever your portal, as I sometimes call it, whatever portal you choose to enter the vertical dimension, to enter presence, is fine, breath, inner body, sense perceptions, movement, either movement as a spiritual practice or spontaneous movement.

That's actually quite beautiful. Most people, of course, you may want to learn Tai Chi or you're practicing Tai Chi already, but there's also such a thing as when you're present, you may feel occasionally, it feels good to move. Let the body move, and there's no thought.

There's simply, the body begins to move. And you're totally in every movement. When the hand is here, it's not going to try to be there already.

You're there at every moment. Anybody who does Tai Chi well is there at every moment. There's not a mental projection from the hand being here but wants to be there.

No, it's here and here and here and here and here and here. It's always now. And it's quite possible that Tai Chi that originated thousands of years ago originally was performed by somebody who was in presence who suddenly felt his or her body moving.

And then the disciples looked at him and said, what's he doing? And then they got a piece of paper and they wrote down, and now his hand is moving to the left. And then it's moving down.

And now his legs are lifting. Oh, write it down, write it down. And then it became Tai Chi that you can learn.

Now the strange thing is, it may have originated probably from presence, but as you go through the motions, it can also take you into presence, even if you're not present yet. So you can approach it from it originating out of presence, or you go through the motions and then they take you into presence. So it does work.

But also, so there's movement as spiritual practice and there's the natural movements that you do. And there again can be a wonderful way of giving it attention, the walking. You don't have to make it into a walking meditation, you can, but any walking from, every time you walk from your room or your cabin to the restaurant can be, be there with every step.

And you can, it makes a noise too, as your shoes or sandals touch the ground. And that's just, then you're not just present with the walking automatically, you're also present with your surroundings. Even eating, eating consciously.

You don't, not self-consciously. Self-consciously, you're there as, you're an external observer of yourself or you're thinking of whether others are realizing how consciously you're eating. There are certain things that can easily take humans into unconsciousness

and eating is one of them.

And I've known people who are relatively, relatively present in daily life, but not completely, let's say not completely un-present. But the moment they start eating, they go completely off and they go. And when they finish their meal, they go, okay.

And also, of course, to some people, food is addictive. And that is only one aspect of what we mentioned earlier. And that is the not enough, the underlying sense of not enough in the egoic mind.

And in some humans, it may take the place of not enough food, not consciously expressed as a thought, but it's an unconscious assumption. And so the compulsion to absorb more food can be in some people an aspect of the underlying sense of more, not enough, not yet enough of trying to fulfill you with something. And it's unconscious again.

If you make it conscious, often the pattern gradually subside. But one way of making it conscious is when the impulse to eat comes, provided you know that the impulse to eat is there and arises. If you're very much identified with it, you might even not know that the impulse to eat has arisen until you're already biting into the chocolate cake.

And you don't even know how it got into your mouth. You walk to the fridge unconsciously, you took it out unconsciously, and you're already chewing. Oh, but as presence arises, you can actually catch the impulse.

And then you can just be with the impulse to have a chocolate cake or another sausage, or look at the fridge and whatever is in there, walking towards the fridge. And you can stop and for a moment, be spacious with it and allow yourself to feel that impulse. And again, it's part of what is in the present moment.

You might as well accept that this is what is at the present moment. Because if you argue with it, or beat yourself up, it doesn't work. But you can be there with that impulse and feel it, give it space, and wait a couple of minutes or three minutes.

And what you then do is really secondary. Whether you still want to go and eat it, then go ahead. Or you may find it's no longer that strong and you can actually leave it.

But either way, it can become part of your presence practice and then it's working. It's secondary really whether you still eat the cake or not. But it's more likely that as you practice this more, unnecessary eating or eating as an addictive behavior pattern will subside.

Let's finish this session with a little meditation. I'll be quiet for once. And we'll start the meditation with the bells and finish with the bells.

Choose where you want to put your attention while we are still here. You have a large choice. You can put your attention on your breathing.

You can put your attention on the inner energy field of the body. You can put your attention on sense perceptions. See the room and hear the noises.

Or, of course, the best of all, and ultimately it all comes down to that, you can put your attention on attention. In other words, you can feel or sense the presence, the attention, aware that you are aware. That's the ultimate meditation.

You're aware that, not that you are aware, you are aware as awareness. You're aware of yourself as the underlying awareness. If you can do that, that's great.

If you need an anchor, then use the inner body or use the breathing or use sense perceptions. Just a few minutes, timeless few minutes. Thank you.

You may want to get up in your own time, sit a little longer if you wish, whatever feels right. Welcome back. I may just say a few words now and then we'll go on to the questions and maybe some answers too.

The greatest thing to learn here, learn is not the right word because learn usually means adding some knowledge or information to your mind. That's usually the meaning of to learn. And to teach means to give out information.

So I'm not really teaching and you're not really learning because it's not about conveying information that may happen to bits of useful knowledge. Yes, but the essence is something else. The essence is for you to become familiar with, to absorb almost, by tuning into what looks like a person, is a person on some level, but tuning into spaciousness.

So you become familiar with something that perhaps you didn't know before and that is to know yourself not only as the person that consists of a history and mental content, but more importantly, to know yourself, not know in a conceptual sense, to sense yourself as that spaciousness also, formless awareness. And you may find at times, you become a person again, totally identified with form. At other times, you move in between two worlds, the world of form and thinking and doing.

But at the same time, there is a space in between the doing when the doing is not always directed to, as we pointed out before, the doing is not always directed to arriving at some point, but it's totally given complete attention in the now, then there is a spaciousness that comes into the doing. Sometimes a spiritual teacher is regarded by the disciples as God or a God. And the reason is that they see him or her and only as the space, and the family of the spiritual teacher say, I don't know what they're on about.

They only see the form. Talk to their children if they have children or their wife if they

have a wife or their parents. They say, what is this?

This is so and so. We know him, we know him so well. They don't get the space at all because they're so familiar with the form of the teacher.

They don't see the transcendent dimension. Their vision is closed. And sometimes even the surroundings.

This is why Jesus said, no prophet, I don't know the exact line, no prophet counts for much in his own village, his hometown. And there's also a line in the Gospels where the family of Jesus, he is with a group of people in a house and his family come, presumably means his mother and he also had siblings. They come and they want to get him because they think he's gone mad.

They want to bring him back home. And they tell him, your family is here. And he said, you are my family, the spiritual family, which transcends the relationships that you have on the level of form.

So the greatest liberation is to know yourself also as space, not only as a person. And this is why you are here. And that happens when you become still and alert and present, the personality subsides.

And sometimes that takes over completely. It could happen when somebody comes who needs some form of healing, not necessarily physical healing, perhaps healing of his mind or her mind, or somebody comes and asks you a question and the answer suddenly comes no longer from what you know, from your mind, but you become still, you hear the question, and then suddenly you find yourself, you start speaking. And the answer comes and it's just right for this moment and for this person.

That is the connectedness with the essence. And it's beautiful when it happens. And then you could say you're beginning to teach.

Anybody who goes through this transformation, and even while you're already still in the process of awakening, the Course in Miracles uses the term teacher. It says anybody who goes through this process of awakening becomes a teacher of God. You teach God.

Not the conceptual God, the true God, which is beyond form. Not the God of this or that religion, but that which is behind the names, the various names. Not my God or your God.

You don't even have my life as a mistake, let alone my God. There's also a word in spirituality and religion called faith. Faith is sometimes mistaken for the complete conviction that certain statements or stories are absolutely true.

I have faith in this and this and this and this. I believe this to be absolutely true. That's a

lower form of faith.

And of course it always applies when you don't really know whether it's true or not, because if you know it, you don't need to believe it anymore. I don't have faith in this flower because I know it's there. But if there is no flower, I can say I have faith that somewhere there is a flower.

So faith in God is something else. It's a sense of trust. Trust in something that transcends who you are, but is intimately one with who you are.

Something that carries you, something in which you are rooted, and something that can actually move and operate through you. And that is called faith. To sense, to feel that trust.

Trust in life or just trust. And with faith, there is a lot that you don't need to know. The egoic mind thinks I need to work out.

There's a lot you don't need to know about other human beings, about certain situations, because a lot of the so-called knowledge of the mind is a pseudo-knowledge. It's not real knowledge at all. And it's a fragment.

You have a thought about a person. He is such, so and so. This is how he is, she is.

It's a fragment, a tiny fragment, and even that's probably distorted. Thought always takes a fragment out of reality, and this is how it is. Also, then, it's very liberating to know that you don't need to.

There's so much that you don't need to know to come to some conclusion about another human being. You don't need it when you're present with them. You don't need to formulate some concept.

This is how it is, and then you carry that around in your head. And many conclusions of that kind about other groups of people, all these rigid opinions, and this is why one Zen master when asked about how to practice Zen, he simply said, stop cherishing opinions when you're practicing Zen. Stop cherishing opinions.

Interesting, he didn't say have no opinions anymore. Cherish, cherish means to hold them dear, my opinion, and really means to identify with. This is my mind, and of course, when you identify with an opinion, you don't know it's an opinion.

You think it's the truth, and your sense of self is invested in it. That's the whole delusion. So stop cherishing opinions.

You can have them in a loose way. Yes, of course. You still have the same opinion about the Democrats or the Republicans, whatever, your favorite politicians.

But they are no longer invested with a sense of self, and there's a space around them. One more thing before we go on to the questions. You may have observed that before you began the awakening process, you spent a large part of your life waiting, waiting for the next thing, waiting for some resolution to something, waiting for the end of the day, waiting for the weekend, waiting to get somewhere, to achieve this or that, waiting for, there's always a waiting game that's part of the old consciousness, the mind-identified consciousness. So that is, of course, you're not present. You are waiting for the next moment, and that begins to subside as you become more present.

You're not always waiting for the next thing because this moment is actually fine. And so when I stop speaking, you're no longer waiting for, but what's he going to say next? Why is he stopping?

There's often, when I start giving a talk, there's often a silence first, not quite as long when there's a huge group because then, before I even start speaking, I've already lost 50% of the audience. But there's a silence, and one reason, of course, is that I love it, and it's lovely to enter the silence, but another reason, of course, is that there's a silence because I don't know what to say. And faith means to be comfortable with that state of not knowing and just be in it, the spaciousness.

And then, at some point, the first words come. So, and then, this is important to point out, not just if you ever give talks, but many other occasions, to become comfortable with not knowing. You don't need to know, not in the conceptual sense, but if you relinquish having to know every conclusion in the conceptual sense, there is a deeper knowing that arises that is non-conceptual.

I sometimes call it non-conceptual intelligence. And that is there, whatever you really need to know at that moment is suddenly there. And that's where it becomes, you become inspired by true life knowledge.

So, anything, also action that you need to take right now, if you come from that place of non-reactive place, right action arises also spontaneously. And if you've ever listened to the Dalai Lama, who you might have noticed that quite often when they ask him questions, and sometimes they ask the strangest questions, and he looks like, I don't know. And sometimes after a while he does, he starts to speak, and then the answers actually, he's quite inspired.

But he starts from not knowing, but he's not uncomfortable about it. If he had a self image as I am the Dalai Lama and I know everything, then he would have to pretend that he knows. But there's just a space there.

You may have noticed that some people with big egos can never say, I don't know. If you ask them a question, they come up with the most absurd answer, just to pretend they have not the slightest idea, but something has to come out because they can't say, I

don't know. Okay, let's have a first question, and I cannot guarantee that I know the answer.

And remember how it goes, there will be a couple of people, I'm not going to pick the questioners, but a couple of people, one person will be closer to here, the front, and another person will be closer to over there in the middle, and we'll pick, I don't know where the person is here in the front who is going to pick the questioners, so that person needs to come to the front while we are still not waiting for anything, of course. Take your time, the longer the better.

Okay, so, one questioner is already there, not waiting either, not waiting for anything, just standing there, that's fine. And let's see how it goes, hi.

[Speaker 5] (3:33:45 - 3:34:16)

Thank you very much, I'm enjoying the conference and all the participants here, and I've read the books, and there's one thing that's been on my mind, and that's when you started talking to us, you talked about all of us having luggage, and I wondered if you carried any luggage at this point, I'm still curious as to whether or not you have a bad day with a pain body that comes out, or with all your practice, has it gotten to the point where you're 100% focused on days and presence?

[Speaker 1] (3:34:16 - 3:37:13)

Okay, there are fluctuations, there are days when, for example, when physical energy is low, and there are days when physical energy is higher, there are days of more intense presence, and other days of presence just being in the background, there's always a sense of that spaciousness somewhere, it's always somewhere, but sometimes it's in the background, and I'm dealing with paperwork or stuff here, and it's there, or somewhere, and I'm doing things here, and then there are times when the awareness comes and almost obliterates everything else, and it goes...

and everything is a bit unreal in the world of form, and everything is compared to that presence, so there are variations, and sometimes it depends on what the situation is, when, before an event, there's often an arising of more intense presence, and sometimes that can also arise spontaneously when I'm just meeting one person who is asking something, or who needs something, one person who might be suffering, and I'm just facing that person, and sometimes it happens that, as this person speaks to me, suddenly I notice an intensification of presence, and then words may come, or they may not even come, maybe there's just the presence and the listening through the presence.

When there is chaos around me, it doesn't happen very often, but it can happen, a chaotic situation, also there's an intensification of presence, so there's a fluctuation of the intensity of presence, I haven't experienced the loss of presence for a long time, so a

bad day as such I wouldn't say, but fluctuations, yes, they happen. What about you?

[Speaker 5] (3:37:23 - 3:37:31)

I was having a good day. I am having a good day, yes. I'm here, so there are fluctuations.

[Speaker 1] (3:37:31 - 3:37:48)

Yes, okay. Okay, where is the next, where is the person who, oh, do we have, do we change from somebody being, okay, welcome.

[Speaker 5] (3:37:48 - 3:38:14)

Namaste, thank you for sharing your wisdom with us. Thank you. You said the world is in a mess, and I was wondering if there are any clues as to how we can get out of it, or do we have to go through a path, because we won't be able to do it, won't be able to get the act together, and what is that path going to be all about, and what's the best way to survive that if there's...

[Speaker 1] (3:38:14 - 3:38:19)

So you're asking about the mess that's out there? Yes.

[Speaker 5] (3:38:20 - 3:38:31)

And if you were to recommend an impact on the curriculum of education for children in schools, what would that be based on all your learnings?

[Speaker 1] (3:38:31 - 3:44:12)

Okay, that's an interesting and good question. The most important subject for school, if I were to recommend, and actually I am scheduled to meet with one or two people who are... Somebody wants to introduce me to the Minister of Education in British Columbia, which is the province, and about bringing in consciousness into the curriculum.

So if I were to recommend, the main subject at school would not be mathematics or sciences or history or languages. These are all secondary. The main subject would be to teach the children the meaning and the reality of awareness.

To show them, of course, it means the teacher needs to embody awareness. You cannot teach it as an abstract subject. The teacher needs to show what awareness is so that the child learns not to be lost in their mind and not to be lost in their emotions.

What it means to be the awareness behind it. And that needs to be a daily practice at school. Everything else is secondary because that is the art of living that should be the main subject.

How to live in a sane way. And it's only when more humans begin to live in that sane way, not the normal insane way, that the outer will begin to reflect that as the new generation grows up. Less insanity means less of a mess and suffering that we create out there.

It is absolutely dependent not on some kind of new governmental policies. No policy can bring about a true change unless it arises out of a transformed state of consciousness. So many things have been tried.

Communism was initially an attempt to create a fairer society. The only thing they overlooked, and when I say the only, it's also the most important, they overlooked the one vital thing. They wanted to create a new society overlooking the dysfunction that's inherent in the human mind.

And so they created something new. And what did it become? A manifestation, in an even more extreme form, of the dysfunction that's inherent in the human mind.

And so what became of it then was quite mad. But the original idea was actually, of course, wonderful. Equality.

Well, the French Revolution already started with that. But equality. No possessions.

That sounds all wonderful. But they neglected the inner, the inside. So it's good that you have two questions.

One is concerning how to deal with the mess that humans have created and what to do about the education of children because these two are really one question. You need to start with the education and to bring in the most essential factor into the educational system. And, of course, that begins with the teachers.

I already have come across and met teachers who are introducing that into their classroom. But it's not yet part of the official curriculum. It's only individual teachers here and there are introducing it, and it works beautifully.

I had a conversation with Oprah a few weeks ago. And, as you may know, she has the school for girls in South Africa. And the first class graduated recently.

And I was amazed when she told me that she had given each of the girls a copy of my little book, *Stillness Speaks*. And then they talked about it. And then she said, they got it.

And Oprah told them, without stillness, there's nothing. You have to try. And they got it, she said.

They got it. That's a wonderful start. So, your question really is one.

The two questions are really one question. And I'm sure you know that. That's why you

asked them.

The transformation of the mess begins in this room and in you. And it's wonderful that you are here because you are the root for the transformed world. Not only children.

Adults have their role to play, too. Because we are still here alive as long as we live. We have the role to play here, too.

Do you live in the States?

[Speaker 5] (3:44:13 - 3:44:14)

I live in New Delhi, in India.

[Speaker 1] (3:44:15 - 3:44:15)

In Delhi?

[Speaker 5] (3:44:15 - 3:44:17)

Yes. Yeah, yeah.

[Speaker 1] (3:44:18 - 3:44:43)

Yes, well, I'd like to go back to India sometime soon. I perhaps see you there. It would be a pleasure.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you so much.

[Speaker 6] (3:44:43 - 3:45:18)

I appreciate the impact that you have on my life and on so many others. I kind of have a practical question. It relates to something you said yesterday about being present with your children.

And I certainly want to be present with my child. You brought up something about they still have to brush their teeth. And I get the infamous, no mommy, no mommy, I don't want to brush my teeth.

No mommy, I don't want to get dressed. And so how do you be present when your child is constantly saying no on a day-to-day basis so that I can really love him that, like you said, be completely present to him?

[Speaker 11] (3:45:21 - 3:45:22)

I'm finding it hard.

[Speaker 1] (3:45:25 - 3:50:07)

All right, now I feel like a Dalai Lama. But let's wait a little. And that's all right.

There's a balance, and that's quite an art to achieve that balance. Since I've never brought up children, I cannot give you concrete examples, but I have observed children and I have observed families, how they live together, how they relate to each other. And the balance is between doing what needs to be done on the level of form, which includes brushing your teeth, knowing also to what extent you need to force a child to do something, which might have to do with preventing the child from endangering him or herself.

Some parents have become so permissive that they allow the child to do almost anything. They can climb up on a high wall, they might fall down and break their neck, and they still let them do it. That is not wise.

But allowing them to explore, allowing them to make mistakes, even fall down, not down a cliff, but don't stop them from experimenting and exploring, give them space to explore for themselves, but at the same time there need to be certain structures in their daily life, which many modern parents cannot because they represent the reaction to the oppressive way of bringing up children that we experienced in the past, of absolute coercion, of not giving them enough freedom, forcing them into their roles, and shut up. Why ask the child, why?

And then the answer is, because I say so. That's not a good answer. But traditionally that was the answer for a long time, and then as a whole we have now shifted to the other polarity where many parents seem incapable of having structures in their child's life, and the child is yearning for some kind of guidelines and structures in their daily life that are absolutely there.

There's no question that this needs to be done. So it's bringing in structures, not more structures than are needed to bring about a sane way of living together as a family. And the rest is, once you have the structures, it becomes easier.

The child knows that those structures, you can't go outside of those, and there are boundaries, there need to be boundaries. Many parents these days don't give boundaries, and then when the child grows up eventually, they have to find boundaries in a much more painful way, and they may end up arrested or something, and then they suddenly find, oh, actually there's boundaries in this world. There are things I can't do.

So bringing up children as long as structures, and once you have that, it's easier to bring in the spaciousness into the child's life, and that is giving attention. So when the child is talking to you, the child learns primarily from their parent's state of consciousness. The child learns not so much from what, as you know, we all know that, the child does not

learn from what the parents tell them.

The child observes the parent's behavior, and it absorbs that, and also absorbs their state of consciousness. If there's a lot of emotional conflict in the family, the child absorbs that, and the pain body grows and grows.

[Speaker 6] (3:50:09 - 3:50:16)

That's extremely helpful, because I think you really put the nail in the head, because I'm really having trouble putting boundaries and structure, figuring out what's guilt around that.

[Speaker 1] (3:50:16 - 3:50:17)

Yes, yes.

[Speaker 6] (3:50:17 - 3:50:20)

And it will help me be more present once he gets into the routine.

[Speaker 1] (3:50:20 - 3:53:56)

Yes, yes. And so the child models your state of consciousness, so that if you embody presence, then something of that will be absorbed by the child. And if you are able to give the child, in addition to dealing with daily situations, this needs to be done, and that needs to be done, and this is not to be done, there's the spaciousness that comes when you look at the child.

Don't always, when you look at a child, come up with something that needs to be done, or tell them to stop doing something. And that's the only way you interact with a child, is to tell them either to do something or to stop doing something. And that's a very impoverished way of interaction.

The most vital element is missing. And, of course, many parents are so absorbed in their minds, they are hardly there, their bodies are there, but the dad is on his cell phone and computer, and the mom is busy with her things, and then they are arguing with each other, and there on the periphery is the child. Nobody is really giving them attention, except when they say, stop doing that, or do that now, it's time to do that.

It brings, give attention, which is looking, listening. It doesn't have to be long, you don't set aside, you don't say, okay, it's time for attention now, it doesn't work like that. It's an organic thing, it's part of your daily life.

So that means you need to embody the presence, and then don't just relate to the child as the mother, that is your role, temporary, because when the child grows up, and you can't get out of the role of mother, you become obnoxious to them. Because you still tell

them what to do, and you always know better. And you are so worried about the mistakes they are making, and you know all the mistakes they are making, and you keep telling them not to do that, and they hate you for it.

So don't get identified with the role, no, it's a temporary thing, and then you grow out, because know yourself not only as the role, but know yourself also as the essence, the essence consciousness behind the role. And the essence is not even a woman, the essence is beyond man and woman, it is the aware presence. So it can be there not only as the role, mother, but the form, but be there also as the aware presence, and the two.

So the child is living with two of you, so to speak, the mother and the aware presence, but they are really one, of course. Well, that's my answer, and you can also ask Dr. Phil about it. Okay, now the next is from the second half of the room, and then again we come to the front half, we alternate between people from the second half and from the front half.

As somebody has been, yes, somebody is walking towards the microphone, we are not waiting for anything to happen.

[Speaker 6] (3:54:02 - 3:54:49)

Thank you, Mr. Tolle. You've given myself and I know many other people this gift that I'm about to present to you, in that I've been walking the road with my mother, who is in the process of dissolution of self through dementia, and the gift you have given me, and I'm sure many others is, that it has become, instead of something very sad, it has become a beautiful spiritual process, and I thank you for that. And my question now is, what can we do as a culture to help encourage others to make this road more comfortable for those, and for us as we walk down that road toward the dissolution of self?

[Speaker 1] (3:54:52 - 3:54:59)

For others, other cultures, or what, how do you...

[Speaker 6] (3:54:59 - 3:55:23)

Well, in our culture, I guess, what I'm trying to express is, I feel like perhaps we don't handle this as best we could. We shove people back, and we put people in corners and away, and I'm wondering how we can use your teachings in a way where we can find presence and bring others into this presence as their lives are ceasing.

[Speaker 1] (3:55:24 - 4:16:34)

Ah, yes, yes, thank you, yes. That's important. It occurred to me recently that, as I was talking to someone, that it may be time for this teaching, which, it's not a teaching, but we have to use words, it may be time for this teaching, which so far has gone out,

spread out into the world at large, to perhaps be applied in a somewhat more focused way to certain areas where perhaps it has not sufficiently, the areas it has not sufficiently reached yet. And one that came to mind as I was talking to this person was college kids.

I got inspired by, I gave a talk a couple of months ago at the University of California, Santa Barbara campus, to a small class of undergraduates. Some were graduates, some were undergraduates. And the talk was about, to do with ethics in daily life.

And there were about 25 people there. And I was surprised how many people, after I talked for an hour, were absolutely, look, they said this had an enormous impact on my life. We feel something has come into my life, many said.

I didn't know it was there. They were transformed, many of them. And that inspired me, because I didn't know I could reach people that age that easily.

And so one thought came that perhaps I'd like to focus a bit more on reaching certain classes of people. One is college kids. And two days later I got invited to Yale University.

I haven't replied, I forgot to reply. I got invited to give a talk at Yale in the fall. Just as the thought came, I'd like to reach more college kids, they came, would you like to come to Yale to talk?

Yes, I would. I just have to remember to reply to the email. And then it came to me another area is prisons.

So that to get the teaching into prisons through sending them reading material and CDs or DVDs and perhaps even go into prison, if that is possible, and work with a group there for a while. And then perhaps we have to use the media these days and then perhaps film it and then perhaps the film of that work could be shown to others. And Oprah had a similar idea.

She told me she was in the shower and suddenly she said she felt she wanted to go into a prison with me. But it hasn't happened yet, but it may happen. And then the other idea that came to me was reaching people who are approaching or going towards death, old age, because that is a wonderful opportunity that is sadly an opportunity that is missed in most cases still, of spiritual blossoming when the form of you, the physical form and also the psychological form, begins to become shaky and begins to dissolve as you are moving towards the dissolution of form. And still the majority of old age centers, senior residences, homes and so on are just waiting rooms where they hang around waiting for death to happen and watching television and playing cards in the meantime. It's an emptiness there, not the true emptiness that we point to, but another emptiness.

And there's a wonderful opportunity there because it is such an important stage that the Western societies don't know about this anymore. It's such an important stage of life

because Western societies are so excessively focused on form they cannot deal with the dissolution of form. They have to deny it.

So in more ancient cultures there is more of an acceptance of death and the elders are highly respected because they can sense, others, the younger people can sense that there is a wisdom in the elders. And so the most respected people are the old people and that is not the case in our civilization at all. They are tolerated.

They may be the cute granny, that's the most, you have a cute little granny, but not the grandmother in the sense of the native Indian tradition and so on. It's a figure of great dignity, the grandfather, the grandparent. And so I don't just want to go back to what we have lost but recover what we have lost and at the same time go deeper and to show people who are approaching death what is possible in the dimension of consciousness as the form is becoming less heavy.

And I have had contact with people who were close to death and quite a few of them, once they realized the possibilities, went into a state of complete surrender and absolute childlike presence. And they looked at you very much like as if they were a little child with a presence there that was absolutely beautiful and suddenly something ageless came through the form. They were no longer old people, only the form was old.

In fact, some of them appeared younger in their last year or two years of their lives than they had been during their working life as adults because there was a liberation there, an inner liberation that happened and the form identity subsided, the heavy form. Because being an adult in our civilization and serious about life and business and dealing with stuff, it's a role. You play the role of adult and you are serious about life and business and it needs to be taken seriously.

It's a role you play. Society teaches you that this is your role. You are now a responsible adult.

You are not playful anymore. You can't really enjoy yourself because you're not responsible if you're enjoying the present moment. You should be worried.

You should be worried about your financial future. That's what you are taught. Yes, this is a wonderful thing, so let's see what happens.

In the meantime, you do what you can, whoever you meet, who is approaching, who is entering that last stage of physical existence, perhaps there's something that you can point out when the moment is right. You always wait for the right moment, which can be maybe a question or some kind of opening that you can sense, and then you point something out. And there may be some old people who are absolutely close to anything spiritual, never say spiritual, but they may be open to, if you suggest, can you feel the aliveness in your hands?

Yes. What are you getting at? And can you feel the aliveness in your feet?

Aliveness in my feet, yes, just try. Do you know if your feet are still there without looking at them? Yes.

And then the rest of the body, how does that feel? Does it feel good? Yeah.

Never say anything spiritual or you need to be in the present moment, maybe that's too much too, but you can feel the aliveness within. Oh, that's good. But you're not convincing them of anything, that they need to believe in something, not at all.

Start with something very, very concrete, very immediate in their experience, and then see where it leads. Actually, I read your book, I was thinking about my sweetheart, and when I read it I wrote this question down. So it is this, how do you keep your ego in check and love yourself at the same time?

Okay, good. The true meaning of ego is you don't even know that there is an ego. When you're really in the grip of ego, you're in the grip of certain mind patterns which are totally possessed by your thoughts, identified with your thoughts, and you are a thought-made entity.

So, to be aware of ego already implies that there is a little bit of freedom because you're aware that there are certain behavior patterns that are egoic. For example, you're aware that when you're having a discussion with people, you suddenly become defensive or aggressive because your point of view is questioned, your opinion is questioned. Or with your partner, you suddenly get into a fight because you need to be right, and your partner needs to be right, and you're fighting about being right, and you can sense the emotional force behind the argument, that leads to the argument.

And sometimes couples, they start fighting, and it starts with, I'm right, no, you're right. It could be something quite totally insignificant, and it leads to a big fight. It's quite amazing.

It could be a simple fact. What was the temperature yesterday? No, it wasn't.

What do you know? You never believe in me, do you? You always doubt what I say.

You believe other people, but you never believe me. You always know better, don't you? There's the ego.

So as it operates, you can be aware of it. And when you're aware of it, it no longer has that force that it has when you're completely unaware of it. And then the awareness grows, because from the awareness you're able to see that it is a little bit insane, to put it mildly.

It's a way to live that is where you carry the excessive baggage around, and you react to

situations through that excessive baggage. You get worked up about things. You take things personally.

When something doesn't go right according to your expectations, you take it personally, and you react to a situation as if the situation had been designed to frustrate you. Me. It's against life against me.

Me against life. That's the ego. So you observe whenever you get upset.

You observe, what did that happen? And then the awareness comes in more and more. So you keep it in check, really.

You can't really suppress it, but you keep it in check by more and more being the awareness rather than the behavior pattern that may still be there for a while. Loving yourself. One aspect of loving yourself is you accept that you are part of an evolutionary transition that's happening, and as such you are not perfect.

There are things in you that are perhaps still dysfunctional, including the ego, and you accept that that is still there, so you have compassion towards yourself. You don't beat yourself up because you got lost in your mind again and you got into an argument again, or whatever it is that the ego does. But there's a deeper meaning to loving yourself, and that is, yes, be compassionate and accepting of your limitations while they're there, and there will always be some limitations.

You are here as a particular form, so as that form you may be good at this, but no good at that. My left brain is probably quite undeveloped, so I have to have compassion with myself. I can't remember numbers, and I could never do mathematics at school, totally failed at mathematics, and even remembering a number, my cell phone number took me four years to remember.

So that didn't improve with becoming awakened. And other things, I have to accept my physical body is not strong, but so far it's been okay. I mean, I haven't seen a doctor in many years, so it must be okay, relatively speaking, but it's not strong and it's not beautiful, so you have to live with that imperfection that for a time when I was younger made me unhappy, but now it's actually all right.

I don't mind. It's fine. It served me for quite a few years, and I'm okay with that.

So there's a compassion that comes as to your limitations. That's good. But loving yourself when you feel good about yourself is much better than hating yourself, and many people hate themselves, are very critical about themselves in their mind, and continuously regard themselves and berate themselves as not good enough, not as good as, should be better, I should have done that, why didn't I do that, why are you so stupid?

They talk to themselves in their head. Why are you always so stupid? You never get it right, can you?

You've been in a spiritual path for so long, and what's it all been pointless? You can't get it right, can you? If you lived with a person like that, as many people have stuck in their head, you would run away.

If you lived with a person that is so critical about you as the voice in your head is, not you personally, but generally speaking, it applies to many people, you would immediately end the relationship. But ending the relationship with your mind is something else that's not that easy. That can only come in through awareness.

It's only through awareness that the relationship with your mind changes. So, and then you go perhaps from loving, from hating yourself, to say, OK, I love who I am. To me, that is, in some New Age teachings, that is the goal of transformation, but as far as I'm concerned, it is a transitional stage, loving yourself.

Because even when you love yourself, what does it mean, I love myself? Who are you, and who is the self? There must be two of you here.

So you're split. You are the one who has a relationship with yourself. The dog doesn't.

The cat doesn't. The dog is itself, him or herself. It doesn't have a relationship.

It doesn't feel good about himself or bad about himself, or have some kind of inadequate self-image. The dog has no self-image, there's no ego. Ego really means an imaginary mind-made image of who you are and living through that image.

So you are possessed by the mental image consisting of thoughts and emotions, and that's me. And so you are possessed by that mental image, and you are split, you don't know it. So loving yourself is a transitional stage that can take you to being one with who you are.

And then you don't love yourself anymore, but love can flow through you into this world. You become love, but you don't love yourself because there is no self anymore. You and yourself have merged, like the dog.

But you have transcended the ego. You haven't gone back to the stage prior to ego, evolutionary terms. You have transcended the ego.

So we have pointed a lot, we have practiced here, being the awareness. When you are the awareness, you don't need to love yourself anymore because the awareness is who you are, and there's no longer a split between the thing that I am and the thing that I love. In that awareness, yes, there is compassion because awareness is a spaciousness.

And in that spaciousness, you have compassion not only towards yourself but also

towards other human beings and their shortcomings. Acceptance is an intrinsic part of awareness because awareness is spaciousness, and awareness is saying, I accept this moment as it is. And this moment takes on many forms that change all the time.

Often this moment comes in the form of another human that comes into your field of vision or consciousness. And that human may manifest behavior that is very unconscious and very egoic. And you don't hold it against them.

You know what it is. You don't make it into their personal identity, and you accept them for who they are. You become the space for what is.

That's ultimately love and compassion becoming one. So awareness is love and compassion flowing through you into this world. And then you don't need to love yourself anymore because you are yourself fully.

This is oneness with who you are, which can be called integrity. And then you look at your dog and say, we're in the same place, except that I know it. The dog just lives it.

And you live it and know it. That's the added dimension.

[Speaker 11] (4:16:36 - 4:16:37)

Great answer.

[Speaker 1] (4:16:37 - 4:16:40)

Thank you. Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (4:17:02 - 4:17:02)

Hi.

[Speaker 3] (4:17:04 - 4:17:19)

I was wondering if you perhaps could offer a few words about physical pain, particularly chronic pain, pain that's been going on for many years and for which no alleviation could be found.

[Speaker 1] (4:17:20 - 4:17:23)

Is that a question that concerns you?

[Speaker 3] (4:17:23 - 4:17:24)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (4:17:24 - 4:17:27)

Yes. What kind of pain is it?

[Speaker 3] (4:17:27 - 4:17:29)

It's pain in my eyes.

[Speaker 1] (4:17:30 - 4:17:34)

Your eyes? And is it constant?

[Speaker 3] (4:17:35 - 4:17:35)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (4:17:36 - 4:17:38)

Do you know the cause?

[Speaker 3] (4:17:40 - 4:18:05)

I've searched for the cause for many years and it was not really possible to determine. I've really consulted traditional ways of medicine, of coping with it, and many alternative ways. The last I heard about it was that it's supposed to be a neuropathic condition that is the result of a dry eye condition that I was suffering from originally.

[Speaker 1] (4:18:26 - 4:23:44)

An important aspect of that is accepting what is, which does not imply that you do not seek help, if help is possible. You explore every possible avenue, but in the meantime, not creating on top of the physical pain an unhappy me that is the second superimposed on the physical pain. Then comes the psychological suffering that goes with the physical pain.

That is something that you do not need to accumulate in you. This is part of excess baggage. If the pain creates an unhappy me entity that complains about it and feels sorry for itself, and so on.

So, accept while it's there. You have to bring acceptance to it. And then, don't formulate certain thoughts in your head about it that make you into a victim where your identity becomes, you become someone who is a sufferer of a particular disease.

And that can easily become, I've often observed it, people who have a condition that goes on and on, in their mind they become a victim of that condition and they describe themselves to others and to themselves as a sufferer of such and such. There's a labeling process that happens. And for some people it even happens that they don't even want to let go anymore of their condition because it has become so much part of their identity and if anybody would suggest to them that they perhaps could find a cure

they might even get angry.

They say, there is no cure. They've looked for a cure for years. Don't even suggest it.

So, don't create. Surrender means allow the pain. Now in your case it's that, it may be many other kinds of pain.

Pain can, if you surrender to it, erode your ego. And I have seen cases of people who've had prolonged pain or prolonged disability, confined to a wheelchair for 20, 30 years or their whole life, no longer able to use your limbs, being totally paralyzed. And some of those have actually transcended the ego without ever having come into contact with any spiritual teaching.

It just happened by itself. In the face of this constant pain they had to give up inner resistance and with giving up the inner resistance the ego, which is resistance to what is, dissolved. And so I've occasionally met people in wheelchairs, for example, and we have, I looked at them, and I say, there's no ego there anymore.

There was just... I thought I saw it, although I'm not sure, that was many, many years ago when I looked at Stephen Hawkins in his wheelchair. And he looked at me and I looked at him.

And I could suddenly feel he's not suffering. He's suffering on the physical level, I'm sure, but he doesn't seem to be suffering on the psychological level. So there was no me entity that was in suffering.

And I found that quite amazing that in the face of one of the worst things that could happen to a human being, you could hardly imagine a worse fate than what happened to him. It would be very hard to come up with a worse story, no matter how much you have suffered in your life. Not to become gradually paralyzed, can't even hold your head up anymore, can't move any of your limbs, the only thing that's still working is your mind, and you're like that.

You cannot feed yourself, you can do nothing. You lose everything. And that was his fate.

And there he was when I observed him every day at lunchtime being fed by his students and trying to speak but no longer being able to speak. He didn't have a machine yet. They hadn't invented it yet at that time.

So only croaking sounds would come out of his mouth.

[Speaker 11] (4:23:46 - 4:23:48)

Croak, croak, croak, croak, croak.

[Speaker 1] (4:23:49 - 4:28:21)

Nobody could understand except the people who were close to him and spent a lot of time with him. They could interpret what he was saying. Croak, croak, croak, croak.

He wants apple pie. And... Croak, croak, croak.

Coffee. He wants coffee. And I'm doing that because it's...

So the amazing thing, what did not happen to him was the build-up of a victim identity on top of the pain. The build-up of an unhappy me on top of the pain, which would be normal. It would be normal for this to happen.

It didn't. For some reason, it didn't happen. So all that was left was that extreme discomfort, but he seemed to be okay with it.

So with a deep acceptance, and this is... I've seen it several times with some people who have had chronic pain or permanent disability, surrender happened. And sometimes also when acceptance happens...

Now, acceptance is not the acceptance of a condition. You don't say, I accept that I have AIDS, cancer, whatever the condition is called. You don't accept the condition in your mind.

What you accept is only the reality of this moment. And at this moment, the condition, which may have a name, at this moment, the condition manifests in some form as either physical pain or it manifests as physical disability or as physical weakness. It manifests in some way, presumably.

And that is what you accept. So you don't have in your mind, okay, I might as well accept that I have cancer or AIDS. I need to accept...

No, that's not... You don't accept some mind structure. You accept only the immediate reality of this moment.

And then healing can also happen and does happen when you go into deep acceptance. There is a... I read one or two books about healing and they found that when people come to a deep acceptance, not of their condition as a whole, but only of that which arises in the moment through the condition, then healing is more likely to happen because with that acceptance comes an energy field that is loving and harmonious and powerful and deep that comes with the acceptance.

So allow the pain to push you into that acceptance of what is so that you don't build up a superstructure of an unhappy me on top of it. And then perhaps a change will happen. So use it.

It's not... Nobody perhaps would choose it, although in new age many people might tell you, why did you choose that? And of course I never say that because it doesn't quite

work that way.

I'm not telling you that you chose that pain, but some new age people will. They may not be entirely wrong, but it's not quite the right perspective. But what I do suggest is accept, and I wrote it somewhere, accept this moment as if you had chosen it.

That's easier. Because if you believe I chose that, you begin to feel bad about yourself and guilty. So that's not the case.

You don't need that. But accept this moment as if you had chosen it. And then a shift may happen.

And even if the pain does not go away, something else gets eroded inside you. And then the pain will have had a certain function that you didn't know it could have. And maybe then it will go away.

So that's all I can offer you with surrender to what is, and don't build up an unhappy me on top of it.

[Speaker 3] (4:28:23 - 4:28:25)

Thank you so much. Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (4:28:25 - 4:28:45)

Thank you. The hand of destiny.

[Speaker 10] (4:28:57 - 4:29:25)

Hello. I had a meditative experience one time that was so... Consciousness was in every cell of my body to the point where it felt like my knees understood like they were communicating with plants in the rain.

In that state of consciousness, it occurred to me that death perhaps wasn't imminent. You speak about the new species arising. Is that possibly what you're referring to?

[Speaker 1] (4:29:31 - 4:29:36)

Was that a short-lived or how long did that experience last?

[Speaker 10] (4:29:37 - 4:29:41)

I don't know. Perhaps 10 to 20 minutes.

[Speaker 1] (4:29:42 - 4:30:01)

So it was an intense awareness of the aliveness in every cell of your body. And then what about your normal day-to-day life? Is there still remnants of that left, that you still

feel that?

[Speaker 10] (4:30:02 - 4:30:22)

Fluctuations. There are times when it feels like a pulling back and I realize that there are shadowy parts of my body. You speak about disease possibly creeping in to those parts of the body.

I accept that I probably will die, but I don't... That you will die? That I will certainly die.

[Speaker 1] (4:30:22 - 4:37:08)

Yes, you will. But with enough consciousness that death perhaps wasn't imminent. No.

It's probably not imminent for you. So that's fine. And even if it were imminent, that would not be a problem when you are disidentified from form and the flowering of consciousness happens.

Now, perhaps you can... Do not try to replicate that experience. That rarely works.

But you can simply, very gently, continue to put attention into the inner energy field. So don't wait for it to happen again. But consciously direct attention into the inner energy field of the body.

And of course, that is part of the... It seems almost as if you were identifying with the body more. But the strange thing is, when you sense the inner energy field of the body, you're actually going beyond identification with the physical body.

Because what you sense is not the physical realm anymore. It's that which animates the physical realm. That is what you sense.

So, you're already... And of course, that is all part of the awakening. What eventually, so it seems, will lead to a transformation of collective consciousness that is so vast that we could only compare it to the arising of a new species, as I wrote somewhere and as you just said.

So, that is what is happening. So, don't wait for it to happen again. But consciously choose to bring more awareness into the body in daily life.

And be happy with whatever awareness is there. So, you may not be able to replicate for a while the intensity of what you experience spontaneously then. But that's not necessary.

But be there as much as possible. An interesting question arises now. And that is, is it not that when you are aware of the inner body, is there not some duality there, you might ask?

Is there not an I that is aware of something? It seems like that when we talk about it. Because when we talk about it, we use language.

And it sounds, if you say, I am aware of the inner body, there's I and there's the awareness of the inner body. But the reality is not like that. And the reality is what you experienced.

And that is, one could say, the entire energy field of the body becomes self-aware. So, it's not that you, there's not you and the body awareness. You and the body awareness are one.

You and the inner body are one. You are that. And it is becoming self-aware.

And that's an amazing thing. It's only when we then talk about it, we formulate a sentence. And in the sentence, we have a subject and an object.

And then we say, I am aware of the inner body. But there is no division there. There is already a sense of oneness.

You and it are one. It's a beautiful thing. And it's also a very healing thing to have attention in the energy field of the body.

It's healing. And it is a great way of preventing disease from arising. Not in every case.

There may be other factors coming in. But it is a great way of preventing many diseases from even beginning to arise. Because in this intense aliveness, diseases find it hard to survive.

Of course, yes, you might ingest poisonous substances which are everywhere in our civilization. Something could still happen. But it's less likely to happen.

So your immune system, this awareness affects every cell of the body. And the immune system becomes actually, I rarely use terms like that which refer only to the physical dimension, becomes strengthened through that. And that's a wonderful thing.

I highly recommend it when you feel the onset of some kind of disease. It could be flu or something like that, which, by the way, can often happen. You may observe it in your own life.

It often happens when you lose yourself in some emotional upheaval, mental emotional upheaval. Something happens in your life. You lose yourself in reactivity, in the old egoic consciousness.

You get upset and negative and angry. And a few days later, you can feel a flu start coming on. There's also a correlation they even find between the onset of serious illnesses and drastic upheavals in a person's life, such as separation, divorce, death of

someone close to you, accident happening to somebody close to you, great loss, extreme anxiety about losing your job.

Upheavals in your daily life can often lead to the onset of disease because they bring about an absence of consciousness in the body because you become totally mind-identified in those states. So, yes, be grateful for that and continue to bring attention into the body so that it becomes a natural way of being and then see what happens. You don't have to do much else except invite it in and then it will do the rest.

[Speaker 10] (4:37:09 - 4:37:13)

The experience made me realize that Jesus probably did walk on water, is how it felt.

[Speaker 1] (4:37:14 - 4:37:38)

Okay. Monday we may try it. With Tony Robbins, people can walk on fire.

Perhaps we can walk on water. Thank you. Where's the hand of fate?

[Speaker 9] (4:37:41 - 4:38:25)

My question is about trusting what arises. For example, at the moment I have a big decision to make in life that will impact my life and other people and a direction seems to arise, simply arise. But I also know that there are unconscious forces, unconscious desires inside me that are silent and can arise in the same way.

How can I trust what arises?

[Speaker 1] (4:38:31 - 4:41:05)

Some things, you're right, arise not from the deep place of knowing and awareness. Some things may arise from the emotional field or the ego or fears and desires may arise. And how do you tell the difference?

There is a certain feeling quality associated with things that arise, realizations, sudden realizations, even a thought that comes that you suddenly, oh, this is what I need to do. There's a feeling quality associated with things that come from the deep place of awareness and of knowing and not from the restless emotional field. There's always associated with it a deep sense of peaceful certainty.

Peace is peace, but a vibrantly alive peace comes with that realization. If a vibrantly alive peace does not come with the realization, it doesn't come from the deepest place. It comes from the intermediate place of emotion, fear, egoic desire, masquerading as perhaps some great insight.

But if it's deeply peaceful, and with that comes a faith that you can't really question that

anymore. It's so obvious that this comes from the deep place, and then you know you can trust that. If it's not peaceful, it does not come from the deepest place.

So if, for example, a decision becomes, should I continue to be in this relationship, or should I leave? Now, the impulse to leave may come from the emotional or egoic level. You get very angry and upset, and finally you pack your bags and you walk out.

That is probably not from the deepest place, but if the impulse to leave comes with a peaceful and deep certainty, then it is right. And then you walk out without even making the other that you leave behind into an enemy. And there you know that's the right place, and you can act on that.

That's how it is. So does that make sense to you?

[Speaker 9] (4:41:06 - 4:41:42)

It does make sense. Sometimes when it does come with that feeling of alive peace, and I've acted on it in the last years as I've been on the path, even then, as that peacefulness stays with me, it still creates turbulence outside. So even that faith stays with me, that somehow it couldn't have been different.

It's difficult. That is not what's reflected back in the world. It doesn't change my path, but I do wonder about it.

[Speaker 1] (4:41:43 - 4:41:55)

The turbulence, so you act on what you feel within, it's peaceful, and then you take some action, and that creates a turbulence around you. Yes.

[Speaker 9] (4:41:55 - 4:42:01)

Even sometimes for me, but yet that peace stays.

[Speaker 1] (4:42:01 - 4:46:52)

Yes. Well, some people may be upset by certain things that you do from there. You're not in this world in order to protect others from their upset.

For example, one's parents, parents of grown-up children, may have certain fixed ideas of what it is you need to do and how you need to lead your life, and if you don't conform to their ideas of what you need to do and how you need to live your life, they get very upset. Your mother might be close to a nervous breakdown, as my mother was, several times. She couldn't sleep anymore.

She said, he's going mad. What is he doing with his life? He's wasted every opportunity.

He could have done so much. He had so much. He's so intelligent.

And what's he doing with his mind? Nothing. Now, I had to accept that.

If I had said, okay, I have to do something so that my mother doesn't have sleepless nights anymore, I'm now going to apply for a job in Wall Street, and then my mother will be happy. That would, of course, be dreadful. Of course, she would be happy, but I would not be happy.

Some people may have to go through the pain generated by their unconsciousness. You cannot take that away from them. So you may have to take certain actions that sometimes cause others pain, not directly.

Ultimately, you are not causing them pain. If I become a dropout, as I kind of did, became a dropout, I did not directly cause pain to my mother. She did it to herself.

That is, of course, the case. And all I could do was compassionately accept that this is occasionally attempting to point out that I was doing what I felt was right for me, even not very successfully pointing it out. And so she continued to feel the pain until, in the eyes of the world, I became somebody.

And then she suddenly could sleep again. So certain things I did created that turbulence, and I accepted it. I wasn't even in a conflict about it.

It was so clear to me that I did what I had to do and could not do otherwise and had to just allow my mother to go through that pain that she generated for herself. So that created turbulence. Another thing that happens is, even when a deep conviction comes from within that is peaceful, you act on it, there is still your mind that may come up with all kinds of subsequent doubts.

It can then start to question, but can you really be sure? Was that really the thing? Maybe I should have done something different.

So the peaceful thing that comes does not immediately obliterate your entire mind, which may still be there and may still question whether what you are doing is the right course of action or not. Because that's how the mind is. But you again have to see what is the feeling quality of it and go to the source and feel that, and then you can ask the mind to, please, you don't need this anymore.

I've already decided on this course of action and this is what I'm going to do. You could otherwise be in conflict for years. Some people live like that.

The mind loves that because it can keep itself going. It can think all through the night, did I do the right thing? Maybe I should have done something else.

So stepping out of the mind as much as you can. Yeah. Okay, do you want to go one first and the other one next?

Okay, so we have...

[Speaker 10] (4:47:32 - 4:48:08)

There are a couple of things that still pull me into the pain body. And I'm aware of that. So I know it's a process and it's getting better.

It won't always be like that. But when I'm in there, it's total suffering. It's really total suffering.

And then when it passes, I see it. I'm having difficulty with a loss of identity. I'm not sure who I am anymore.

[Speaker 1] (4:48:09 - 4:48:11)

Okay, that's good.

[Speaker 10] (4:48:23 - 4:48:25)

I feel kind of lost.

[Speaker 1] (4:48:26 - 4:54:03)

Yes, yes. Well, that's the transitional stage. There are really two questions.

There's the pain body question, pain body episodes, and the sense of being lost because you're not quite sure anymore who you are. And not being quite sure who you are and feeling uncomfortable about it is a transitional stage for many people as they go through the awakening process. And once you've gone through the transitional stage, not knowing who you are and feeling uncomfortable about it, you reach the stage where you don't know who you are and feel comfortable with not knowing who you are.

And then there is a deep knowing in there, who you are, but you couldn't say anything about it. When you become comfortable with not knowing, as I am, I don't know who I am. I don't have concepts in my head that tell me who I am.

I have other people who think they know who I am. They say he's a spiritual teacher, or they say he's a writer, or they say he's done great things, or whatever they say, or they say he's insane. They all know who I am, it seems, but I don't subscribe to that.

I don't have a sense even that I'm a spiritual teacher except when spiritual teaching happens. Right now, I seem to be a spiritual teacher because I'm sitting here and teaching happens, if you want to call it teaching. When I walk away from here, and I don't carry around the sense of identity that here's a walking spiritual teacher.

So a spiritual teacher is a function, but it's not an identity. It's a function, so whatever you do in your life, you perform a function. You may have a job, whatever you do in your

job, it is a function that you do.

And while you do it, you can call yourself that, teacher, whatever you do, the function, but not an identity. You don't carry it around as an identity. The most liberated place in yourself is the place of having no particular ideas in your head about who you are, but just being the awareness.

But the awareness is not an idea. It looks like an idea when you talk about it. But being the awareness, that's who you are.

But conceptually, you can only be the awareness if you give up on a conceptual level trying to figure out who you are. So it's only when you give up trying to figure out who you are conceptually, and conceptually means it's some story you tell yourself. This is who I am.

It may not even be your job. In some people, in some cases, it's their life story. I'm a sufferer of abuse.

Of course, it's a sad thing that you suffered abuse, but to build an identity around it is a deception, a conceptual identity. I'm a sufferer of such and such. And then you can go to a convention of sufferers of such and such a condition and to strengthen your sense of identity.

It's very seductive. Oh, now we know who we are. So not knowing who you are feels a little strange to you right now, but if you go more fully into that and you see that there's an awareness there that doesn't need to know conceptually, and that's who you are, and you are rooted in that.

So just continue what I said about the function of being a spiritual teacher, and then I walk away to my room or go somewhere, but not as a walking spiritual teacher, but simply as a walking field of presence, a field of awareness walking. But that's not a conceptual thing. That's an immediate realization that I am the awareness.

But I'm only the awareness because conceptually I've become comfortable with not being anybody. Comfortable with not being anybody. So your transition, the discomfort, will be replaced by acceptance of not knowing who you are, and suddenly you feel yourself rooted in awareness, or you are the awareness.

Then you know who you are by not knowing who you are conceptually. That's the beauty of it. And now let's come briefly to your pain body episodes.

There are certain situations in which it tends to arise. Perhaps you can even note the two or three particular situations where it happens again and again. Perhaps to do with other humans close to you.

Am I right? Yes.

[Speaker 10] (4:54:06 - 4:54:11)

It has to do with my daughter and money. Those two things.

[Speaker 1] (4:54:11 - 4:57:41)

Okay. That's a big thing for many people, their children and money. Money can bring up a sense of the fear that makes up many people's pain body.

Pain body can consist primarily of anger. The pain body, which is the old accumulated emotion that you carry around, can also consist mainly of fear. Fear of survival and so on.

And particularly for those people in whom the pain body contains a lot of fear vibration, money often triggers that fear. And it could be sometimes insignificant amounts of money and you can suddenly have a reaction. \$10.

\$100. \$100. So whenever you...

You lose awareness when the pain body arises and the awareness returns when it subsides. So it's not yet there in the middle of it. I recommend that when you approach a situation that you know may lead to your pain body coming up, a discussion with your daughter or a particular situation that tends to repeat itself with your daughter or something to do with money, the moment your attention begins to focus on some money situation, bring that alertness to it knowing that at any moment this thing may trigger my pain body and turn up the dimmer switch inside you so that you become more alert as you begin to deal with money matters, for example.

Okay, now let's look at my bank account. It's like handling a hot coal. Hot coals.

Careful. Be alert. And then you may find it may not even come or if it does still come, at least there will be an awareness as it happens.

If there can be an awareness as you get taken over by the pain body, that means you're not completely taken over by the pain body. The beginning of the end, which may take a while, but the beginning of the end of a pain body is when the awareness begins to be there even while it's happening, which may not yet prevent it from happening, but you know it's happening and not just afterwards. And that is more likely to happen if you have a little bit of foresight so that you know, I'm now approaching a possible pain body situation and then the alarm, maybe they should invent an app for that, that you carry your cell phone in your pocket and when it senses certain skin reactions that are associated with pain body, suddenly the cell phone goes, burp, burp, burp, burp, burp.

So maybe somebody here can come up with that. Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (4:57:52 - 4:58:24)

Hi. I'd like to know if you have someone in your life who has suffered from a medical condition and it has become part of that person's identity and you see that person suffering, how could then I be most helpful to that person to help, I can't tell the person what to do, but to help alleviate the suffering?

[Speaker 1] (4:58:25 - 4:58:32)

So there is such a person in your life? A very close relative or friend or?

[Speaker 9] (4:58:32 - 4:58:34)

A child.

[Speaker 1] (4:58:34 - 4:58:37)

A child. How old?

[Speaker 2] (4:58:37 - 4:58:41)

Well, a young adult. Young 20s.

[Speaker 1] (4:58:47 - 4:59:03)

It's likely that if you tell him or her, it is likely that if you tell her, this is not who you are, probably is not going to be received well. Maybe you have tried it.

[Speaker 9] (4:59:03 - 4:59:06)

I think I've said everything. Yes.

[Speaker 1] (4:59:09 - 5:01:46)

Yes. It's probably best not to address that particular condition, the psychological condition, if you want to call it that, of pseudo-identity, not to address it directly, but simply what I suggested a little bit earlier, to do what you could do with older people who are maybe not be open to anything spiritual whatsoever, introduce somehow, find a way of introducing to them to body awareness. Somehow, maybe you can think of something that makes it an occasion that arises where you just do it, you say, oh, I learned something interesting, you want to try it out, and try out, guide them, guide them into body awareness as something that actually is fun and feels good, and it works for me, you say, it's not a lie, hopefully, it works for me, and it actually is very pleasant to do.

And when you guide them into body awareness, inner body awareness, that already takes attention away from where it is usually lodged in their mind, and of course that is in their mind is where the pseudo-identity lives, as an idea of who I am. So the more you

take attention away from their mind, put it into the body, the weaker the pseudo-identity, which is an idea, becomes in their head, and you never need to address it directly, you never need to question the pseudo-identity, because as you know, probably it doesn't work. So take them out of their mind, and see what happens, and then they may love it, and then begin to embrace it, and live more centered in the body rather than in the mental realm, so they become rooted in something more real than the level, dimension of ideas of who they are.

Another thing is, of course... Oh, how old is that person? Twenty-three.

And what is your relationship?

[Speaker 9] (5:01:47 - 5:01:48)

My daughter.

[Speaker 1] (5:01:49 - 5:02:04)

Your daughter. Okay. How does being in nature...

Does she have a relationship with the natural world, or the world of nature?

[Speaker 9] (5:02:05 - 5:02:06)

Not so much.

[Speaker 1] (5:02:06 - 8:03:22)

No. If you can somehow take her out of the mental realm... These days, many youngsters are very much immersed in the abstract realm of electronic media devices.

Many youngsters are continuously... It's always a pity to see, when I see the young people, children often, they are with their parents, they are on vacation, and what do they do? The children are going...

They're in some new place that they haven't seen before. They could take it all in. Wow.

Wow. But the parents don't seem to be guiding them either. They don't say, Let's touch this, look at that.

They let them just... I'm just imitating what I saw a few days ago, a family, the two boys, maybe 12 years old and 14. They hardly looked at each other or the world around them.

The complete attention completely absorbed by... As if the device was sucking up their consciousness. I'm surprised there's no conspiracy theory yet on the Internet about these devices sucking up our consciousness.

Maybe I shouldn't have said that. There is? Maybe there is.

In some ways it's true, but it doesn't need to be some evil thing behind it. We created it, so it is quite an obstacle. It takes you away from...

It completely takes you into your mind and into the world of mental abstraction. And it has an enormous addictive quality. Potentially it can also be used for awakening.

And this is why I'm happy that the Internet is being used here also to spread the teaching and why I did the Oprah webinars a few years ago. So to counteract the negative impact it has on human consciousness, there is also a possibility of using it in a positive way. So nature can be very healing and can bring balance into a person's life and also help take them out of excessive mental...

dwelling mentally in your mental identity. It can take you also into the body, also interacting with nature in some way, going on hiking, anything where you are in touch with the elements. Maybe you can take her on some trips where you both engage in interacting with nature.

And bring in inner body awareness also. So all those things are helpful. And then a shift may happen without you having to address it directly.

Sir, in one of your lectures, I recall you saying that when tragedy and devastation comes into our life, try in the first instance to accept it. And if you can't do that, try to accept how we feel about the occurrence and eventually the winds of grace will blow over us and we'll discover a deeper peace than we knew before. Then, in another lecture, I recall you saying something about this barren painting.

And I recall you saying that she's a bit radical in her posture vis-a-vis this thing because she says learn to love it the way it is, period. And it does sound radical compared to your position, but it is a position that a lot of people I know espouse, at least intellectually. What do you feel is the middle ground if there is one between you and this barren painting?

Thank you. Of course, barren Katie, she loves what is, and so she teaches what she lives. And it happened to her, it happened to her spontaneously.

And I've spent time with her privately and she truly seems to love whatever is. And this is her teaching. And my teaching is related to it, but I don't quite express it in such extreme terms.

I say many situations, you may not be able to love that situation, but you're always able to bring acceptance to it. And if you bring acceptance to it, there at least is a peace around the situation. So let's say you find yourself stranded somewhere, your car breaks down in the middle of nowhere, you walk through the rain, you can't find anywhere.

It's barren Katie can probably love it. She loves the feeling of the rain and breathing in the air. And every step is great.

Why should it be otherwise? This is what is. And you love it without even telling yourself mentally that you love it.

You just love the experience. Any experience, you love it. And that's how she, this is what happened to her.

And this is what for quite a few years people around her thought she was mad and she couldn't hardly talk to people anymore because there was no common ground anymore with ordinary humanity. But now she's able to interact again. And I find for most people it is easier in extreme situations not to try and love it because you cannot try and love a situation.

But acceptance is much easier. Acceptance is the realization that you cannot argue with the is-ness of this moment and if you internally argue with the what is because what is already is. And if you resist it internally, that is how suffering arises.

And when you observe that process, then you see how suffering arises and when you see how you create your own suffering and ultimately not the situation but you, your reaction to the situation, then you're closer to the end of suffering. And this is what the Buddha taught. He said, I teach suffering and the end of suffering.

By which he meant, I show you how suffering arises. And by, and when you see how suffering arises, how you create it, that is the beginning of the end of suffering. So as you bring acceptance to a situation, a certain peace arises, a peacefulness comes.

So let's come back to the same situation. You cannot perhaps love having to get out of your car in the cold and the rain and total darkness in the middle of nowhere. What do I do now?

Usually the mind would go into, and this is just a relatively insignificant situation. There are far more serious situations than breaking down a car in the middle of nowhere. This is what is.

If that is your realization, you don't have a mental commentary on that. You simply stay with every step and see, what can I do now? And that is acceptance.

And then you're more likely to do the right thing when you bring acceptance to it. And then you may find the acceptance deepens. And as you go about taking the necessary steps to end that particular situation, to remedy that particular situation, as the acceptance deepens, you may find that there is no clear dividing line between acceptance of what is and loving what is.

At some point, they merge into one. And this is why sometimes a human who accepts and then goes more deeply into acceptance suddenly finds that what we call acceptance has turned into loving what is. So acceptance, if it's deep enough, becomes loving what is.

So ultimately, they are intimately connected and ultimately one. And now, that was the last question for today. I'm getting a signal that we need to finish for today with a little meditation on stillness.

On time. Being in the present moment and on time. Being spacious but not spaced out.

Welcome back, everybody, here and elsewhere on the planet. Whatever time it is where you are, it's also the present moment. The present moment is a deeper truth than what time it is.

Two levels. Of course, we can't escape from time on this level. There is undoubtedly the reality of time because although you cannot ever experience time directly, you can only notice the effects of time.

If you leave an apple out for a few days or weeks, then you look at it every day and you notice the effects of time on the apple. It begins to shrink. If you wait long enough, it disappears completely, miraculously.

And then all that's left is a bit of dust. And then that gets blown away and that's time. You can do the same with yourself.

Take a picture on your phone of yourself and then wait a few years. With the apple it's a few weeks and you may have to wait a few years before you notice certain differences. And then you compare the two and say, What happened here?

Time. Assaulted by time. The body got assaulted by time.

If you're interested in poetry, a large part of Shakespeare's sonnets are about what time does to the human being. Quite pleasant to read. You become very much aware of impermanence when you read those poems, Shakespeare's sonnets.

So that's a spiritual reading. Although he doesn't say anything spiritual. But it is spiritual because when you are presented with the fact of impermanence and see it clearly and accept it, not go into a state of fear and say, Oh, I'm going to grow old.

Will you still love me? Will you still need me? When I'm 64?

No. I'm 64 now. And I sang that on my birthday.

Now when you look at the impermanence and accept it, then you can sense something in you from where you can see the impermanence, but which in itself is not subject to

impermanence. There is something, let's talk about there's something in me that is the same now as it was 30 years ago. A sense of beingness that has nothing to do with the passing of time.

A deeper I, not the I when you say I, that can usually refer to the surface level of who you are. When a human being says I, usually they talk about their physical body, that comes first, that's always the first thing in your mind. And then comes the mental I, the psychological entity, the mind made entity, the person, the personality, the conditioned self, what the Buddha called the self.

And I think also Jesus called it the self, because he said deny thyself, which means recognize the unreality of the self. So there's the self, when a human says I, usually refers to that entity, the history of me, in other words me, which I sometimes call me and my story. That's where people derive their sense of I from.

But there is a deeper meaning and level to I, when I comes from a deeper place, it refers to the unconditioned I, the beingness itself, the consciousness itself, not the form that it has taken as a thought, but the pure consciousness itself, the pure awareness, the pure, just the presence. And that's not subject to time, but when you look at, do not close yourself or resist the fact of impermanence and you see it in front of you, you only really see it from the perspective of the timeless. I sometimes say if there were nothing but impermanence, you wouldn't even see it, notice it, because it would be like imagine everything on this planet were green, you were green and every object is green and everything you see is green, the color green wouldn't exist, because it only exists if there's something else too.

There would be no word for green and nobody would know that everything is green. So there is something in you that notices, that is a witness to the impermanence of the world of form. So when you contemplate impermanence, not through thinking, but from the pure awareness, space of pure awareness, then the space of pure awareness becomes more conscious of itself, so to speak, through contemplating the short-lived nature of all life forms.

So that simply means, in practical terms, when you look at impermanence, whether it's an actual thing that you see, it always comes to me very strongly whenever I look at an old photo in a book or in an antiquarian store or a junk shop or where they have old photo albums, whenever I look at an old photo and you see street scenes of people in 1920 or whatever they are doing and I always come immediately, there's a deepening of stillness for a moment and go, they're all gone now. All these life forms that you see on the photo have dissolved and been replaced by others.

You can have a street scene, I saw New York, the same street in 1920, you can still a little bit recognize that that's the same street as now, just filled with completely different people because all the people you see on the photo have dissolved. But the same

consciousness has assumed slightly different forms and is living again and again and again in this dimension of time through these forms and expressing itself through these forms. Because it would be sad, one would have to weep looking at old photos and say, all these lives, what have they lived for?

Hasn't it all been in vain because they thought everything they did was so important and now they're all dead and gone and nothing was really that important. So if you come to strange conclusions and it could lead you to a nihilistic conclusion that it's all so pointless, isn't it? But that's not how it is.

You see that something arises in you that is deeply peaceful. Also when you contemplate death itself and surrender to it or sit next to it. I spent some time when my mother died sitting next to the body and the sadness came and then a very deep peace.

And a little bit of that peace is always there. The fact when impermanence is faced, there's something. I'm just pointing this out so that you can verify it in your own experience next time you're confronted with any sign of impermanence, which could be a dead leaf that's fallen from the tree or a wilted flower or an old photo or whatever it is and stay with that.

Or you watch a movie that faces the reality of death or old age. I have seen some movies like that, for example, The Notebook, a lovely movie. You see the same couple as youngsters and very old and she's beginning to lose her memory and they all come together.

It's beautiful to contemplate. It's spiritual because the contemplation of impermanence, if it's not rejected or interpreted in some way, come to some conceptual conclusion, no, just contemplate it and then something, feel very alert, something you notice, something arising in you that is deeply peaceful. You don't even need to interpret it.

You can just notice. If you don't run away from the fact of impermanence, something becomes deeply peaceful. Buddhist monks know that in some Buddhist traditions, the monks regularly go to the morgue where the dead bodies are and spend hours there in meditation.

And if you don't know the reason, then it looks very strange, you see. That's a morbid thing to do, isn't it? Of course it's not.

There's a deep reason for that. The death is all around you, which death means a form dissolves. It's much more obvious and therefore it can be a spiritual experience to go to India where death is not always hidden as it is in the West.

Let's hide the dead bodies, says the Westerner. It's all sanitized. And in India, somebody dies in public.

The bodies are being burned. And that's quite a, oh my God. There you see the reality of the impermanence of all physical forms.

And also, another fact is the old age, which is by the way what led to the Buddha's search for enlightenment when he was a young man, was the realization of old age and death and sickness. But old age, for the first time he saw consciously, he looked around. Well, the story goes that his father wanted to hide all these things from him because an astrologer had predicted that he would either become a great leader or a great spiritual master.

And his father wanted him to become a great leader and not a spiritual master. So his father, he must have known somehow that if he became aware of old age and death and sickness, then he would become a spiritual person. But at one point, the young man, the young Buddha, when he wasn't the Buddha yet, went out into town and for the first time, or for the first time consciously, saw a dying person and a very old person and a sick person.

And he asked somebody, what happened to these people? And he was already 25 or something like that. What happened to these people?

And somebody said to him, well, it's called old age. And his father wanted to surround him only with lovely young and beautiful people where they lived in the palace or mansion. And old age, what's that?

Yes, well, is that a disease? No, no, it happens to everybody. Then what's the point of it all, he said.

And that was such a shock to him that soon later he left it all behind in the search for something that is not subject to impermanence and death, the eternal, God, the eternal, whatever you want to call it. And it took a few years and then he realized it within. But it was that which brought about his search was the fact of impermanence.

If he had not faced that, it would never have happened. He would have become involved in the superficialities of daily existence for the rest of his life. So old age also is hidden mostly in Western countries because as soon as you get really old, you're usually in a sheltered place where you're being looked after, but you're no longer roaming about the streets and you're even separated from the family so that the children no longer live with their grandparents in most cases, as it used to be.

So the children are hardly aware of old age and occasionally might visit. So there's a separation. They're the old people.

And if you go to other countries, non-Western, you see old age much more because they're still around. They haven't been put away. So you see people in a much more realistic view of human existence than you would get in the West if you look around.

So impermanence is a beautiful thing to contemplate. And again, the most powerful way to contemplate impermanence is to face it in whatever form, because it's always the decay and the dissolution of form, to contemplate that and not think, not draw any conceptual conclusion. No, just be with it.

And be that which the awareness for it. And then you will notice a deepening and an arising of something that cannot be really put into words, an arising of a deep sense of peace and spaciousness. So that is how impermanence can become a spiritual, lead to a spiritual realization.

And they've known this for thousands of years, except Western people. And of course, a large part of the world is Western these days. One could almost say China is Western and Japan is Western.

Very powerful things to see. Sometimes people have filmed life forms like plants, how they are born and how they die. And what usually takes place over a period of several weeks, or days at least, is condensed into two minutes.

And you see the cameras on the plant that comes out of the soil. And it's a miraculous thing to see how it shoots out. Of course, it's speeded up.

It shoots out and then the bud appears. And then the bud opens. Sometimes it closes and opens because some flowers close at night.

And then you see that for a while. Daytime. Nighttime.

Daytime. Daytime. Nighttime.

And then, very quickly, it no longer opens, or it stays open and open. The more and more it begins to collapse. And then the entire plant collapses and disappears.

And that's an amazing, amazing thing to see. You could do the same with a human, except it wouldn't be practical because the cameraman would be dead before the human dies. But I have seen a wonderful, I may have mentioned it before, some of you know, a wonderful commercial that somebody sent to me.

It's from some Scandinavian country. The most spiritual commercial I've ever seen. And it's for beer.

Which beer, I don't know. So, on that level, the commercial probably doesn't work because nobody remembers. Don't remember what beer it is.

It starts with a, it's a kind of cartoon, but it looks lifelike. A baby shoots out of the mother's womb in a kind of explosion and goes up into the sky, screaming. So the baby shoots out of the womb, into the sky, screaming.

But as the baby travels upward, it already begins to grow. And by the time it's reached the highest point, it's already a fully grown man. And then the descent begins, and the scream, the voice, of course, deepens a bit.

And it continues to scream all the time. And then the fully grown man goes downwards and, of course, becomes old very quickly. All this is within less than a minute.

Becomes old very quickly, and just as he approaches the ground, is a very old man, and he shoots into the earth. And there's a gravestone there. And I watched that when my mouth opened.

Because there you see the reality of the life of form. And, of course, all it said was at the end, life is short, drink. Unfortunately, I forgot what to drink.

And that also makes you realize that on the level of form, nothing is all that important. There is something beyond the form. Beyond form, something that expresses itself through the form, something that grows somehow as the form faces its challenges in the world of form, something within evolves and grows into this dimension that comes from some other dimension, the formless, the one.

One could almost say, the one or God incarnating gradually into the world of form. I don't want to offer too much of an explanation of the universe because the mind cannot do that. You cannot comprehend through concepts what the purpose of the universe is.

You can get a sense of it in yourself, but not through concepts. You can, on a non-conceptual level, through non-conceptual intelligence, which is awareness, you can have realizations that you can never verbalize. Nor would you want to because you would know it would be immediately falsified.

That's why the writer of the Tao Te Ching said, the Tao that can be spoken of is not the true Tao. You can only point, you cannot explain the universe. Philosophers have tried, but of course it's absurd.

How can you explain the vastness of what is unfolding, the cosmos? I mean, even the earth is incomprehensible. The cosmos, how can you explain the vastness that is unfolding there through a few sounds?

Or a few mathematical symbols? Scribbles on a piece of paper? Or on a board?

I mean, it looks impressive, but is that the explanation of the purpose of the universe or the underlying purpose of it? Or words? How many sounds are there?

There are five vowels. A, E, O, U, Y, whatever. And these are the vowels that the vocal cords produce.

And then you have the other consonants that are produced by air pressure. And you put

these together and then you expect to have some ultimate answers through that. But they tried.

That's good. That's fun. So this is all about the realization within you.

That's why you are here, why I am here, and why you are there, wherever you are. It's always here and now. It's about the realization of the formless dimension in you, which is, if you want to attach a word to it, just as a little pointer, it is a sense of deep and alive peace, an inner stillness, a space that looks like a not-knowing space, because no conceptualization happens, a space that you do not need or cannot fully inhabit continuously, because if you did, you would spend the rest of your life like that. And you would not need to do anything. If you totally dwelled there, you would simply be, and it would be joyful.

And if you lived in India, you could survive that way, because people would come and feed you, because they would see there is something there that is the transcendent shining through this form. And if you do it in the West, an ambulance will come, and you will be taken away. So it's the destiny for most humans is to find a balance between still being interacting and doing things in the world of form, but at the same time, being willing to do things rooted in something much deeper, or another way of putting it, sensing your own reality, the essence of who you are, as something, it's not a thing, something within that is far deeper than anything that you can do or perceive or think.

It's being, being itself. And so you find a balance between being. Being is experienced or known as the deepest I am.

When you say I, it can express that deepest level of being, I. And that is the eternal I that has nothing to do with you as a person. That is really where all your true sense of identity comes from, of who or what you are.

Even the sense of identity that is attached to a story, what really happens is the deepest sense of I is shining through the forms of the story, and you feel there's me here, there's an identity here. If you remove the story, then you can sense it directly, something very precious. But when it's associated only with a story, so it shines through in some obscure way through the story, then you think that is your identity, not the light behind it.

Because the story can only exist because it appears in the light of consciousness. So the light of consciousness, which is that essence, shines through whatever the story in your mind is about who you are, what you're telling yourself, the ideas that you have about who you are. How is it possible for you to have these ideas about who you are?

Because there's a light of consciousness or the space of consciousness in which these appear. So that is shining there and makes it possible for you to even have a story about yourself. So you could say the story is the film that runs through the projector and the

essence of who you are is the light behind it.

And all that the film does, it obscures the light in various places. And by obscuring the light in various places, it creates the illusion that there are people there. And it creates the illusion that there's something important happening out there and drama.

And so everybody senses there's something very precious in them that they don't want to lose. Everybody senses there's something that I don't want to die. There's something so precious there.

But it's usually associated with the superficial level of the story, which is the film, not realizing that that preciousness is actually the light. So you confuse the surface level of reality, which could not exist and ultimately is not separate from the core of reality, the unmanifested, and then it is essentially the timeless essence. That which you touch in yourself when you realize the formless, sense it, is not just in you.

It is the core of all life. So you're not only touching the essence of who you are, it's the essence of all life, all other life forms, the very same essence. So it's the expression self-realization, but the true self that is realized goes far beyond any form.

So you get to the very core of the universe itself, in yourself. So it's nothing to do with some kind of selfish pursuit. It far transcends what you conceive of as you.

One could almost say it is a self-realization of the universe, when through this form the universe becomes conscious of its own being. So there are two levels, because you are the universe, obviously, you are an intrinsic part. Human beings sometimes think that they are in the universe.

You're not in the world, in the universe. You are the universe, you are an expression of the totality in this particular short-lived form. You haven't been put into it, you have come out of it, and you go back in, and you go out again, and back in, and out again.

This is the continuous movement of forms arising, forms withdrawing, and arising and withdrawing. So you are the universe. So there are two levels of what the universe wants, and this is not philosophy, you can simply verify that by looking at your own life.

What you want, the universe wants. So on one level, you enjoy the forms, and on one level you want to do something, create something, many of you feel you want to contribute something, create some new form, or somehow make a contribution, to bring something into this world, and that is the level of manifestation. The universe manifests through you, the creative aspect, you can become a co-creator of the universe, you can manifest, there are books about that, we may talk about that again, but not right now.

And also, you can contemplate the beauty of life forms, and appreciate them. We talked yesterday about looking at a tree, for example, and the tree finding itself, and its own

beauty and sacredness through you, and knowing it's because ultimately you are not separate. So, when you look at things, and appreciate them, you bring a consciousness to them, that the tree is deeply connected with being, but the consciousness is not as evolved into this dimension, as the human consciousness.

So, in some sense, you can say the tree is closer to God, which is the one being itself, and an animal is closer to God, so to speak, than humans, because they are still more deeply connected with being. Humans have gone out into differentiation in the world of form more, therefore, their mind has developed, their mind can now create thought, and can now look at the universe through thought, and it has created a more developed, a stronger consciousness that goes out there, so it can do something that those other life forms, or ultimately they are all one, cannot do. So, when you contemplate at night here, you look at the stars, you look at, you walk around, you look at all the beauty around in the present moment, of course, it's the only place where you can notice things, and you go, oh, and there's a stillness that the universe is now enjoying its own creations, that's what's happening, and consciously contemplating them, it's not really you, because you are an aspect of the universe, so when you see beauty, the universe sees its own beauty, it's obvious, and when you appreciate the creation, then the universe appreciates what it has created, that's obvious. So, on one level, it wants to know itself, and through humans and other life forms, the universe wants to know itself, and it does that, it also wants to create more forms, that's the outward movement into differentiation, life on this planet is now far more complex than it was 500 million years ago, it was much more simple, and it's the complexities growing so quickly, that even if you go back a hundred years, life on the human level is much more complex now, than it was then. Now, we don't know for how long the movement into complexity can continue, because there is a point when the tree cannot grow any more branches, and they begin to collapse, and then the tree needs to simplify itself again, so if there's an excessive proliferation of complexity, at some point, there would be a collapse, and that's fine, that's how it's meant to be, and the world becomes more simple again, and then something new arises, but let's put that aside for a moment. So, there's the outward movement of the universe, which it wants is to create forms, and they are continuously being created on this planet, and I'm sure billions of other planets, life forms are being created continuously, it's like the play in this Indian term, Leela, which is the play of form, on some level, it's a playful thing.

To the universe, it's not tragic, the fact that one fish gets eaten by another fish, one minute after it's born, to the universe, that is not tragic, because the very same life essence, immediately, is there again in another form, and another form, and another form, so the universe enjoys the play of form, and it wants also to become more conscious of that, and that happens through the humans. So, on the one hand, there is the outward movement, which is creation, manifestation into form, and then there is another movement, and how do I know that? Just look within, and you will find the two

movements in yourself, which could be expressed in the most simple terms by saying, on the one hand, you want to do things in your life, and create things, and be active, on the other hand, you also want to be deeply at peace.

There is something that draws you into deep, you want the peace of God, as it's called sometimes, you want the peace, you want a sense of absolute fulfillment, you want to feel most clearly and strongly who you are, essentially, and that is the movement into being, being and doing. So, one is the outward movement of the universe, birth, birth, birth, and another one is the return movement, which humans call the spiritual path. The spiritual path, essentially, is not how to manifest a big house, or whatever you want, that's not spiritual, that's more, it's to do with the outward movement of the universe, so it's not to be condemned, it's just, I sometimes say, the two movements, as far as contemporary teachers, if you want to call them that, is concerned, the outward movement is most clearly expressed by Tony Robbins, when he goes, you can do it, you can do it, you just go out there and do it, and that's what the universe also wants, and Eckhart says, be, be, and that seems to be the other movement, the return journey. Of course, the fact that both exist means, yes, they both have their place, and it is possible, actually, for a human being, and that, I would say, is how we are meant to live, is not to get lost in the doing, because eventually you would become insane, yeah, I'm still doing, I'm still doing, I can't stop doing, I just have to stop doing, and there's the next phone call, and there's the next deal, and now we create this, and you don't lose yourself in being, as I think we already pointed out, you go, oh, if I had a choice, because I more represent the being, I'd rather be lost in being than in doing, but there's a balance, now, not every human needs to be right in the middle, and very few humans can be right in the middle, where they are effective as a doer in the world, without losing their connectedness with being, with being rooted, still rooted in an inner, there's an inner space or core of stillness while they do. Very few, I said to Oprah, you may be one of the few who is right in the middle, because she is connected with being, but she's always constantly doing, she's doing so much, I would collapse if I lived like her, she just doesn't stop, but she's not lost in doing, she returns to stillness, so she's kind of in the middle, for most humans, they can't be in the middle, nor would you need to be in the middle, most are either tending a little bit more towards there, the being, or a little bit more towards the doing, and that's fine, and this is why humans differ, not everybody needs to be totally balanced between doing and being, and I have the expression in A New Earth, I use the expression frequency holders, to describe humans who live much more on the level of being, and are not very interested in doing great things, they are happy to have a life of simple things, perhaps they are gardeners, perhaps they have a job that provides a sufficient income that they pursue, and they don't feel the need to go beyond that, and that's fine, I call them frequency holders, because their job is to be present in whatever they do, and with whomever they interact, to bring presence into the simplest action, traditionally those people lived in monasteries, but nowadays very few people live in monasteries, but there was in the past, or of course in Tibet, a section of the

community lived in monasteries, so the frequency holders traditionally were monastics, but our modern civilization has little place for monastics, many monasteries have closed down, and the others are sparsely populated, and so these humans feel perhaps, I would say, 80% into being, and the rest is the things that they do, and awareness flows into whatever they do, but the state of consciousness that you embody has an influence, affects the totality of consciousness, so those frequency holders are important, also they are as important as the doers, those who are 80% into doing, and perhaps just 20% still connected with stillness and being, they are as important because they present a point of stillness within the totality of human consciousness, that's why I call them frequency holders. The danger, if you are a frequency holder, there is a danger if you are a frequency holder, and there is a danger if you are more of a doer, if you are more of a doer, the danger is that eventually you get lost in the doing, and if you are 80% into doing, then before you know it, you may be 90% into doing, and 100% into doing, and you are lost, and that can happen. If you are a frequency holder, and predominantly rooted in being, the danger is that instead of remaining on the, what I call, on the level above thinking a lot of the time, which is what awareness is, you have risen above the thinking level, you still think, but you have access to the level of awareness, and the awareness flows through you, which is above thinking.

And if you are a frequency holder, sometimes because of the type of life you lead does not contain enough challenges, if you lead a very protected life, job security, pleasant surroundings, many gardeners are frequency holders, you work every day in this lovely garden, your job is relatively secure, you have a little place to live, you have enough to eat, and you are just wonderful, you hold the presence.

But it can happen that after a few years, because of lack of challenges, because challenges are wonderful things, they bring about, they shake you awake, lack of challenges, without the frequency holder realising it, gradually he or she seeps below thinking, is still peaceful, but the alertness is lost, and you become like somebody who is getting tired and is peaceful because he or she is tired, not because they are awake and alert. And that can happen very gradually to a frequency holder, without him or her even noticing it, but after a few years, it's all good, it's all fine. It's nice, they are still very nice people.

I'd rather be with them than with somebody who is completely lost in doing. But these are the dangers associated with the doing, and the danger associated with somebody who is more into being. You will know, most of you probably know, whether you are more drawn towards doing or more drawn towards being.

I would say that the majority of you here go a bit more into being, otherwise you would be at Tony Robbins' firewalking. Or perhaps some of you have been there and done that, that's possible too, and realised, oh, this is not quite the fulfilment that I was looking for, that is possible. Another thing that happens to some humans is that there are periods in

your life that can be several years, it can be ten years, sometimes more or less, there are periods in your life when you are moving more into doing, and then it's followed by a time period when you go more into being, that is also.

So there is on the one hand the natural inclination more towards doing or being, and then there is a temporal factor that applies sometimes to humans. Now traditionally, of course, the being has been associated with growing with old age and where it naturally belongs because an 80-year-old who is still frantically doing there is something not quite right. How is the stock market doing?

80-year-old, how is the stock market doing? Okay, buy this, sell that. Or the 80-year-old woman looks in the jeweller's shop, I'd love that diamond ring, it would look so great.

Okay, at that point in life if you haven't gone into being at an earlier stage of your life, then it's time even for the doer when you reach a certain age, even for the doer it becomes time to embrace being and make that the predominant dimension in your life. So eventually if they live long enough every human eventually to lead a complete, fulfilled human life that is lived in the way it's meant to be lived according to the purpose of the totality every human in old age has to move into the being dimension. And again, this should be common knowledge in our civilisation, but it's not.

Old age is regarded as, you become useless. It's a waiting room. Senior residences in most cases are waiting rooms, you're just waiting to die.

And it's tragic on that level that our civilisation still knows so little about the possibilities of old age and how the flowering of consciousness can happen, even to the greatest doers, if they get old enough let's see what Donald Trump does when he's 85. He may move into being. So it's good not to attach too many concepts and judgements to a person because they may go the other way.

So if you fix somebody and say, this is how he is well, maybe right now, but who knows. There's a every human life is a journey and of course the one human life is a small part of a much larger journey. So see where you belong as regards doing and being.

And they have to be reconciled. Some of you maybe this afternoon when we have questions and answers, there may be one or two questions about doing and being and how to reconcile them or even you may be so much drawn equally this way and that way and so you totally hear, okay, I could do so much but on the other hand I just want to be. What do I do now?

So that has to be one has to look at individual cases. I spent a lot of my life as a frequency holder so much so that I was regarded as useless by the doers and a failure a loser Now that's a nice label, isn't it? And then life said, okay you're not only you can't remain in the dimension of being mostly life said, come you're also meant to do and at

first reluctantly and then I surrendered to it and I said, okay I'll go out and give talks and I'll write a book and now of course one could say I'm doing quite a bit but all the doing that I do is of course it's almost a paradox I go and do and give talks but it's all about really it's more about being than about doing Now what this civilization as a whole needs more undoubtedly is the being dimension it does not need much more doing because there's so much doing already, we are out of balance already on that side of doing very much so so if we do even as a collective as a civilization if we do more and more and more eventually we just create more and more chaos because continued doing without some connectedness with being creates an insane world and eventually makes you insane so the civilization that is disconnected from the source of course goes into more and more doing and you know that stress so many people suffering from stress it's all created by the civilization there's no stress out there it's humans created for themselves and so that is already a mild form of insanity to be stressed means you lose connectedness with being and there's an element of fear in it and you get very upset and very quickly you get negative and angry that's all part of stress and then you create the world that corresponds to that state of consciousness so the world is out of balance undoubtedly and to regain the balance it needs to go into being finding the connectedness with being the good thing is we return to being because humans once had natural connectedness with being a long time ago when they lived a more simple life one with nature the golden age that's the subject of many mythologies in many cultures speak of a golden age that once Indians also talk about the golden age and then gradually deteriorated which really means the gradual deterioration is a gradual disconnectedness from source or unawareness of source of the one and now we are returning, this is why we are here we are returning to that but it's more than a return always when you have lost something and then regain it it's more than just going back to what was before there's an added dimension now when humans return to connectedness with being they return with a full knowing that wasn't there before when it was your natural state in paradise, as it's called mythologically the garden of Eden when you lived in virtually continuous joyful, pleasant there was no problem as such, there was no stress there was just simple doing alignment with nature, ego hadn't developed yet so there was no problem and there was just the present moment there probably might have been already some language simple words perhaps but almost certainly no past and future tense I'm told, I don't know if it's true that the language they speak in Bali whatever language it is has no past and future and that's why people there are actually relatively happy compared to the rest of the population so of course if you have no past and future that's very helpful, there's only this moment and that's already the portal into being so we come back to where we started with the present moment and it's always coming back to the simplicity of that don't forget your practice here the present moment practice of noticing everything around you so that it everything then becomes helpful everything takes you into present moment awareness present moment awareness and immediately the being dimension arises and if you want to be balanced then you discover gradually you have to work it out in your own life discover that it is possible to

be in present moment awareness predominantly in your life and nevertheless be effective also as a doer you can you have to experiment with that start with simple things first you start with whenever you do non-challenging activities that you tend to do repetitively and see if you can stay connected with the present moment awareness even while you do when you're going from A to B be present with every step and if it's not a step, be present behind the wheel of your car be present as you drive I enjoy driving because it's a very peaceful thing every light that you stop at it's a peaceful moment and you look around and it's so interesting there's not only the vibrancy of the red light it's light, it's vibrant it's a manifestation of life also the red light and then you look, the humans are crossing the street everybody looks different and there's a tree and there's the sky and every time you stop at a red light it's a slightly different arrangement of humans and trees and sky and other cars and you're just there as the aware presence for all that and there's a peace you don't get any faster to your destination by thinking I should be there already and then let your mind pull you out and then you go and your entire body becomes tense I need to be there now but you're here now so every all these routine activities can be vehicles so that you can allow present moment awareness to flow into the doing and here we talk about doing simple things, routine things and then the next step is to see if you can stay present when small challenges come that normally would have pulled you into some kind of reactivity your mother-in-law calling and when you hear her voice then you know, okay I need to be particularly present now and alert because if I'm not, I'll be pulled into the same old reaction and we'll play out the same old drama that we always play or when you meet with your relatives or you visit your parents then you bring an alertness to that whatever you do, present the moment and then something new perhaps, you want to create something new whatever it is, build up a new, something, a business build up some enterprise open a store to sell chocolate whatever open a coffee shop sell liquor spiritually, coffee shop is probably better than selling beer because at least coffee makes you more alert I must admit there's a little story which I might have told before when I shifted from being totally anxious and depressed and confused person to being a very being peaceful and feeling the wonderful sense of every cell is alive with life and at night I would enjoy lying in bed and whereas before I was getting bored when I couldn't go to sleep and of course I couldn't go to sleep because I was bored and the mind was thinking about whether I would ever make it in this world and how dreadful my life was and it can't go better because you don't see how it's going to get better and so whatever the mind does, I was totally identified with it and then suddenly after the shift just lying in bed in the deep enjoyment of being, of aliveness and I was almost sorry to go to sleep eventually and for a while I would drink coffee before going to bed so that I could stay awake and continue to enjoy so if you then create, you may have some vision of what it is that you want to do in this world perhaps bring something new in if you are more on the side of doing then you're a bit more towards that side and that's fine, see if that is if it comes out of that peaceful place that vision that you have not from an egoic place where you think when I finally reach that goal that I have then I'm going to be really happy and fulfilled and that is not the

motivation that leads to fulfillment whatever you create needs to come from a place of fullness already and then it's a pleasure to do and then you don't lose yourself in the doing and so the state of fullness is a deep connectedness with the present moment and realizing to feel that peace and aliveness, there is nothing that I need to add to my life so whatever I do, I don't do it in order to feel better about myself or in order to find some happiness at some point some relief from my unhappiness that would be stressful to do in that way but something arises that wants to be created through you, whatever it is and then you do and it flows from the fullness of being, which means you can always tell if you enjoy the doing while you're doing it, then you come from the right place, if it becomes stressful then the goal has taken over which is a mental projection and you're no longer connected with being when I say when it becomes stressful it does not mean there cannot be an intensity to the doing, even when you're connected with being there can be an intensity of focus which every creative person probably is familiar with when the creative process happens there's an intensity of focus which goes...

and there's enormous joy in that too when something is being born, whatever it is I remember when I was writing *The Power of Now* or *A New Earth* there was this intensity of focus that could even look from an outsider looking at you when there's such intensity of focus he or she might even think that you are stressed but there is no stress in it there's just that intensity it transcends who you are as a person it means a power is moving through you and something is being created that's the joy of the creative process so as long as there is joy in whatever you're doing then you are connected intensity may be there, but that's an aspect of joy too it is joyful to be in that intensity when stress arises that's a sign you're losing either you're beginning to lose the connectedness with being or you're doing the wrong thing perhaps it was an egoic desire that impelled you to want to create that new bank on Wall Street let's set up a new bank okay there could be such a thing as an enlightened bank or a banking system, it hasn't happened yet who knows, that could be the case but those things are more likely to be egoically motivated but a simple thing is stress you're not aligned anymore with universal purpose because it's only when the doing arises from universal purpose and not just egoic purpose then the creative flow is there so you have to find your own I'm just giving a few hints you have to find your own way there watch out for stress and losing yourself in the doing so perhaps in the afternoon we can interact a bit more and talk about maybe some of you might tell us what you're doing already or whether you're finding it hard to find the right avenue for universal purpose how to be more deeply aligned with universal purpose this is a question for many there was a time when I felt there was not enough, I felt this deep connectedness with being but it wasn't manifesting externally in any big way at all I was reaching a few people who came to me for spiritual guidance and the years went by and that was fine I was more deeply in being than in doing and yet I felt there's more that I could do so the pull into doing came in and I remember after a few years of working with people and sometimes giving talks in people's living rooms, they would invite me in invite friends and I would talk and at

some point I gave a weekly talk in a B&B, the owner invited me in and whoever was staying at the B&B would come and listen and at some point this pull into more doing came in out of being, and when that pull came the thought arose, I could do more there's a lot there that the world needs and wants I'm only reaching a few people, that's fine but the pull came, so I went into a church in a tiny village in Somerset, near to where I lived in England, and these old village churches some of them 500, 600 years old 700 years, a very old church in a tiny village, and I sat in that empty church I love empty churches I sat in that empty church and all I said, I was very still and all I said then was, all the words came I'd like some acceleration please and then I went back home and 3 months passed I didn't notice any acceleration at all 4, 5, 6 months passed and then after about 6 months, one morning I woke up and I knew, I have to move I couldn't question it because it was so strong and I also knew where to I have to move to the west coast of North America Why? and I didn't act on it at first because sometimes these things come as just powerful thoughts, but not from the deepest place and if they're not from the deepest place they come and then they disappear but there was a peace associated with it a powerful sense of peace and purpose and then it stayed the next day I still said, I have to go and a week later, I have to go and if I had stayed, I probably would have fallen ill because I would have not followed the call and then I got ready to sell everything and get rid of, I had a little cottage sell it, and that took a few months and then finally I got a plane ticket and I thought at first, California west coast must mean California but I didn't know anybody in California well I knew one or two acquaintances but somebody had just visited the place where I lived in Sussex, who was from Vancouver and he said, come and see me I told him I was coming, come and see me first and then spend a couple of weeks and then you can go to California so I flew out of Vancouver, he put me up at his mother's home he was a little bit of an outsider too, he lived in the basement of his mother's home and was writing a spiritual book there but his whole family thought he was mad and there I was and I sat there in his mother's spare guest room and said what am I doing here and I didn't know, I stayed for two or three weeks then I took a bus to California on the Greyhound bus to San Francisco and there I knew one person and at first I stayed in a kind of small hotel and then I went to a meditation group that had been organized by that person in Palo Alto the acquaintance and during the meditation, there were about 15 people she said we have a visitor here from England and he's looking for a place to stay and I said a few words I did a little meditation with them and afterwards a man said I have a guest room ok, I'll come with you then so I stayed in his guest room in Menlo Park and still he had his business I was alone most of the time in his apartment why did I come out here how long is the money going to last where am I going after this no home, no life insurance no pension plan not even relationships anymore I left them behind and then after two or three weeks there suddenly the impulse came to buy a notepad yellow notepad and then on the kitchen table I sat there and the pen and then suddenly a strong energy stream came through and I wrote the question came, what's enlightenment what is enlightenment and then and that was the energy stream that became the power of now and I had old writings

with me that I had written casually over the years things that came to me during counseling sessions some of those I read again and I said oh some of this is not bad at all and some of it I incorporated into the more empowered writing that was happening then and some of it became incorporated into the power of now but that was when the stream happened and that went on for three months after which my visa stamp expired I had to go back to England and so the writing happened every day during those three months first in Menlo Park and then I found another place in Sausalito and after three months I had to go back to England of course I had no home to go back to so I stayed in a commune which is quite interesting in itself and there I thought I would continue to write but nothing happened, I couldn't write I could only edit what I had written and so after two months I bought another ticket and went back again to Vancouver this time, again to Vancouver first and even after Vancouver the writing came back, the stream came back so anywhere on the west coast would work one more time it happened and then I knew beyond any doubt there was a reason why I had to leave England because for some reason the energy field there was not conducive to that particular creation that had to happen I needed the dynamic and peaceful and yet dynamic particular energy field that is there on the west coast which doesn't mean everybody needs that so don't all go off to the west coast so I still have a connectedness with England for some reason I still feel very much, I love the country and the people and the land and yet the creative process for some reason could not happen there but the answer then to my request, Acceleration came a few months after the request had been uttered, voiced and the Acceleration was at first the creative process and I thought that was it, little did I know that was only the beginning of the Acceleration and then the book came out after three years and then the book grew through word of mouth for one year and I could see, oh this is wonderful everybody seems to love it at that time everybody loved it because it got into only the hands of those people who were ready for it and then Oprah suddenly discovered the book and then of course it got into so many people's hands some of whom were ready for it and some were not and then not everybody loved it anymore but many people still did and then the Acceleration came and grew and grew and I almost thought, oh dear so you be careful with what you ask for so a request uttered from a place of stillness can sometimes be quite powerful if you feel it's coming not from the personality but from something that wants to happen through you something, when you say I want Acceleration it's not really the I self, the egoic self that wanted Acceleration when the words came the universe, the totality, the consciousness wanted the Acceleration and that led to the words asking for the Acceleration and that was part of the coming into form of that energy movement and this is a wonderful thing when you notice something that comes up from a deep level within you and then you say it but it doesn't come from the surface level of your mind so you may get a vision of what it is not so much what it is that you want to create but a more apt way of putting it would be to say a vision of what it is that wants to be created through you that the larger whole or the totality wants to create through you so it's not the question of what I want it is the question of what the greater whole wants the totality of the universe or consciousness and then the creative

process is not only enormously empowered but is also a joyful thing so not that on a personality on the level of the little person of course you always experience even in the greatest things you create you always experience that every situation you go into, every new situation has always a polarity to it so as the acceleration came and it accelerated and accelerated I lost some things that I loved very much like not being noticed by people I loved always being in the background as just the observer of everything and suddenly I found instead of being the observer I was being observed and so I had to surrender to that I realized that comes with it so you can't keep your privacy and this is a small sacrifice to make for the person who would rather remain invisible and that's just how it is there's always something you need to surrender to and I've since talked to other people who have become famous in Hollywood or elsewhere and they said for a long time they longed for fame and when they finally achieved fame they realized, oh, is that it? It's not what I thought it was and it's not really making me happy at all at first it gives an acceleration and then there's a huge downside to it and some of the famous people especially actors and so on when it comes to them very early they go quite insane and some become very unhappy they take drugs, they can only survive with drugs even great artists they get overtaken by the energy stream that comes through them and such as happened to Michael Jackson for example there was this enormous energy coming through and he couldn't really fully integrate it into his life, the energy that came with the creation and he probably didn't have much spiritual guidance it didn't reach him in time if he had continued to live a little longer he probably would have had some spiritual guidance and be able to accommodate, to live with it without being swept away by this enormous energy that came through him the moment he started performing in his normal life he looked quite ineffective you wouldn't have thought there was a powerful there wasn't a powerful person there it didn't look like a charismatic powerful person but the moment he moved or sang something came through this also is a creation into form this is the outgoing movement the universe wants to create through humans and when it does sometimes powerfully it really pulls you along perhaps one day one could have a retreat for people who are coping with very powerful creative energy streams that are going through them that would be an interesting retreat please continue to use your particular situation here as part of your practice not only nature which we already pointed out but use the interaction with other people which is one of the joyful things that you have here use the interaction with others also as part of your practice and when you talk to others you engage in conversation be aware of not only the thoughts that lead to the words but be aware of yourself as the underlying the stillness or the awareness there was a teacher in Russia he was Armenian but he lived in Russia and then in France he was an early 20th century spiritual teacher and he had a term called self-remembrance and what he called self-remembrance was not as you might think remember your story remember who I am and my life story nothing was like that at all self-remembrance was a term that he used for being aware he never put it like that but what he meant was being aware of awareness to feeling the awareness in you even while you do things and even while you speak and one of the ways in which that

effects the way you interact with others when you have said what you had to say you stop and there is a stillness after that if you don't have that you may have observed it in other people not here of course if you don't have it there are people who talk and one thought leads to another and another and another there is a stream and they never come to a stop you listen to them and they continue to talk it's one thing but then it leads to another and there is no gap ever and this is particularly difficult when you are trying to leave because you are trying to find the slightest gap that gives you an opportunity to say OK, I have to go now but the gap doesn't come and so you sit there waiting and there is a stream of thinking it goes on and on and on and perhaps finally they start coughing or catching breath OK, I have to go now so it's easy to get drawn into a stream of thought and pulls you along it can also happen when two people are having a conversation they can mutually pull themselves along so they are totally in that they are both engaged in that stream one stops talking and the other one immediately picks him up and goes, oh yeah and often it sounds terribly important the same stream you can have when you listen to people on the radio they talk and talk and talk and what they are saying is quite meaningless it's just words and when you listen to that in a foreign language you think they must be talking about something terribly important what are they talking about?

nothing much, just gossip and whatever so what I am saying is be careful not to be drawn along with the mind so that you are not in the grip of thoughts it's wonderful to have thoughts but it's not wonderful to be possessed by thoughts so as I sometimes put it the difference is between having a thought and a thought having you so or you could call it an opinion opinion is a little group of thoughts or a sentence or a perspective or a viewpoint but it's a thought form and again, it's not somebody even said it once I saw it quoted most people don't have opinions opinions have them they don't know that so that means to be in the grip of thought completely identified with thought which brings me back of course to what I quoted yesterday the Zen master who said to practice Zen the main thing to do is stop cherishing opinions now he used opinions in a wider sense it really means any mental perspective any mental position, any mental viewpoint any thought and when he said stop cherishing I think he meant stop identifying with, don't seek yourself in it, it's the self when the sense of self goes into the thoughts then you are in the grip of thought and that's what we call unconsciousness unconsciousness is to be totally in the grip of thought and then you do whatever your mind tells you to do and when you are in the grip of thought you lose empathy with other humans because you are then in the grip of conceptualized reality in the head and when you are in the grip of conceptualized reality you lose the ability to emphasize and to feel the aliveness of other life forms around you you get very much trapped in an encapsulated sense of self with a strong sense of separateness a sense of separateness that even that separate self wants to even emphasize it loves therefore to condemn others and to criticize others and it loves doing that all the time because the more it can criticize and condemn others even if it's just through gossip of how silly they are and what they did again and shouldn't

have done all that kind of stuff when it can do that it immediately feels superior and more separate look at all these people and of course the pattern is so strong that you can have a group of people who are gossiping of somebody who happens to be in the bathroom and then that person comes back from the bathroom and then another person goes to the bathroom and then they start gossiping about that person it can become quite extreme so to be trapped in a conceptual reality you lose that ability the thing that makes you human the thing that the one thing that really defines you as a human or fully human being is the ability for compassion and empathy and to feel the aliveness of others and to feel that there is something beyond the personality that you share with the other life form with other humans but even with other life forms there is something that you share and what that is we could call that life but not the life form the underlying one life, we could also call it consciousness there is a consciousness even when you look at a dog or a horse into their eyes there is a consciousness there and that is no different a different level of manifestation yes, but the essence of that is no different from the consciousness in you there is only one life, one consciousness manifesting through all the life forms in different degrees of manifestation and that you can no longer sense in other words you are trapped in the world of form, thought forms and when you are trapped in the world of form you no longer know what you do to use the words of Jesus some of his last words they know not what they do, forgive them for they know not what they do when you are trapped on that level of form you no longer know that you are inflicting suffering on others because the others to you are lifeless you have made them lifeless through conceptualization by attaching labels to them and if they have been lifeless you lose all empathy and compassion you can either insult them or you can do all kinds of things to the degree that even violence becomes possible in the more extreme cases well the more extreme cases in 180 million cases in the 20th century alone therefore you can see the connectedness between the enormous violence inflicted by humans on others because they lost empathy through conceptualization and the collective mind and there is a connectedness with you talking to somebody in the dining hall and losing yourself in a mind stream a much milder form of the same dysfunction here we have one extreme, violence but a milder form is to lose yourself in the mind stream it doesn't mean that you immediately are going to attack that person hopefully not but it could happen if you are totally trapped in there the other just becomes another mental position to you conflicting with yours the enemy so let's go to the root I read yesterday the Burmese leader whose name I can never quite remember everybody knows who I am talking about she is visiting Europe at the moment and they asked her why did you never condemn the military that imprisoned you in your home for 20 years or so why did you never condemn them and she said condemnation does not bring about change we need to look at the root of evil condemning it does not bring about change or condemning people who perpetrate things she didn't even say that by the way she only said condemnation does not bring about change we need to get to the root of what creates that we need to tackle the root and that's very wise and that's why the greatest leaders Gandhi, Nelson Mandela and her few others they never condemned other

humans they just embodied a more awakened state of consciousness so the temptation to condemn others is always egoically motivated even though it might look terribly rational to condemn all those evil people they are not in essence evil they represent a stage in evolution, the unawakened stage so any kind of condemnation of other humans is really, there is always ego there which doesn't condone, doesn't mean you condone what they do you see it but the important thing is what is the root of it and the root in the first instance is always to be found in your own mind because you are not separate from others and if we go through this shift this awakening from identification with form then the world is beginning to change not the other way around maybe the expression not from the top down by creating new organizational structures no, from the bottom up your state of consciousness if then at some point new organizational structures are created, that's fine they are created out of the new consciousness but you don't create the organizational structures first because egoic things will go into them and there will be another ego creation so this is the transformation the shift in consciousness that happens in you brings about the new world or the new us it's so simple we have a little stillness I mentioned this morning Gurdjieff the spiritual teacher early 20th century Armenian by birth, lived in Russia and then in France and then I got distracted by something else he had a technique that he called the stop technique and I got tempted to use it right now as I came onto the stage the stop technique was he had disciples I don't have disciples but when his disciples were gathering and doing whatever they were doing sitting, talking, he would sometimes come into the room and then he would shout, stop and everybody had to freeze whatever they were doing, however they were standing they had to freeze and that was an attempt perhaps a desperate attempt to help them to become present of presence and he called that self-remembering stop because they were all immersed in the mind stream before he said it no presence at all and stop was to produce that deeper sense of presence and get them out of their mind he also used movement almost a kind of dance to help people become present you can also apply it to your partner have an agreement and if you notice that your partner is immersed in his or her mind or mind coupled with an emotional field you can say stop but you have to have an agreement first it's easier of course to see when it's happening to somebody else than when it's happening to yourself another agreement that I sometimes recommend is there is another version of being totally identified and that is the pain body which occasionally arises in humans as you know, a pain body is an accumulation of old emotion consisting often of fear or anger and that frequency of unpleasantness and pain going back sometimes to early childhood and perhaps even beyond early childhood so it's regarded as a byproduct of the ego it becomes associated with the ego as the ego grows and it has a life of its own like a little gremlin I think in the gremlin the gremlins have the stage when they look cute and then later they look really evil and I don't mean the cute stage it's the gremlins at the later stage that's the energy of the pain body and when that takes you over of course you are in the grip of it and if you have an agreement and you notice it arising in your partner in many relationships pain body episodes come periodically and this is called drama in the relationship when

you are completely unconscious one pain body provokes and brings up the pain body in the other person and usually the pain body is triggered by something relatively small and brings up a reaction out of proportion to the triggering event and then by that you can recognize that this is the pain body so it's a small event that brings up a lot of old emotion and magnifies the importance of that small event and that is the triggering event and so it's very helpful to have an agreement with your partner that if you notice the pain body arising the earlier you catch it the better sometimes it comes so quickly before you know it, it's already there especially if it's anger you say something some innocent remark almost and then the pain body that's ready to awaken because it hasn't fed on somebody else's emotional reaction enough it needs to take in more food in the form of energy vibration that corresponds to its own vibrational field and it's easy, it reacts it just waits for some excuse and anything you say could be slightly off and it goes how dare you say that and the other person and then before you know it the two pain bodies have come up energizing each other through the drama it can take a few minutes an hour, who knows and then it could also go on for a day or two the drama on and off until finally they have energized themselves and each other enough and then it subsides again oh ok, let's make up and it's like the thunderstorm has passed but unfortunately it will come again when the pain body feels it's time to feed again pain bodies, they are linked into your mind and they have an intelligence they use your mind, it's the emotion as you might find it strange that I talk about an emotion as if it were an entity but it is a little bit like that it's an energy field like every thought every thought we could regard as a kind of psychic entity it's a thought form and thoughts also thoughts can be like a virus in your mind a thought can proliferate, it can occupy your mind it can do so in a harmless way like a tune that you can't get out of your mind you have to hum it all the time and that's a relatively harmless way of a thought occupying your mind or becoming like a virus but other thoughts can be quite harmful obsessive ideas can get hold of your mind and they refuse to go now if there is enough awareness in you it's not that much of a problem because there is still that field from where you can see the thought you are the space for it if there is no awareness you are at the mercy of an obsessive thought you are not necessarily declared insane there are many people who are at the mercy of obsessive thought and are still considered totally normal it's only when it goes to an extreme and you start becoming a problem to the people around you then it becomes a clinical thing but it starts as a normal thing many people are considered totally normal throughout their lives, are still plagued by obsessive thoughts which are like entities that are created through mind activity and there they are stuck and you can have an obsessive thought occupy an entire collective energy field of a nation an obsessive thought, for example, there was Russia or China or wherever a country gets obsessed with one particular way of looking at things and so you had China when the cultural revolution happened suddenly everybody had as if something had gone into everybody's mind everybody has to think in exactly the same way that was the thought that the collective virus that had taken possession of people's minds anybody who deviates from that would become eliminated millions were killed in the middle ages it was a religious

obsessive thought anybody who deviated from the norm would be very dangerous there was a thought police virtually any priest that said anything that somebody high up in the hierarchy disagreed with would be easily killed imprisoned, tortured, killed oh dear it's quite insane so thoughts can get hold of you as happened in China when children would report their parents it was a very widespread phenomenon would report their parents to the authorities because their parents had said a few sentences that were not totally in agreement with the great shamans little red book and everybody had to dress in boiler suits and that lasted a few years and finally that obsessive collective thought pattern disintegrated slowly it's still stuck in a few people's minds but not that many anymore and so yes, they are like both a thought and an emotion they are like little entities with a limited life span and so the pain body has a little bit of almost an autonomous thing like a thought too and it wants to survive in that form so it doesn't want to dissolve it doesn't want to die as the pain body it never really dies because the energy that's trapped in there when it dissolves in the field of awareness gradually the energy that was trapped in the pain body actually becomes freed and becomes life energy again so the anger or the fear that was constituted in the pain body that was in there you don't need to eliminate that because it's life too, it's life energy too it's just kind of frozen, stuck and so in the field of awareness when you know when it arises in you this is the pain body and you don't even need to verbalize it you're there as the witness then a transmutation begins and it can no longer then perpetuate itself by feeding on either one or two things that it primarily feeds on one is people close to you it pushes their buttons it has that cunning intelligence of the gremlin and it goes and then it pushes your partners it knows what the sensitive buttons are in your partner and it pushes those sensitive buttons and before you know it if you don't know what the pain body is doing the reaction comes so it's good at manipulating the other in order to get the same thing back that it lives on and so you need to be very conscious you need to recognize it before it starts to feed the most common and favorite feeding ground for pain bodies is families that's where they thrive at work sometimes too but the favorite thing is families or even more favorite is the intimate so called intimate relationships so it feeds on the reactions and the drama but if there's nobody around to feed on it can still feed it feeds on your thoughts when it's ready to arise it can be triggered just by one little thought that is slightly negative you get up in the morning and everything is fine you get into your car and then in the traffic something happens and you suddenly say what a real idiot and that can be the trigger for further negative thoughts how dreadful life is anyway and most people are so stupid and then it goes on one negative thought leads to another before you know it you are immersed in a stream of negative thinking and the pain body actually feeds them because thought is energy it feeds on your thoughts every negative thought it gobbles up like a gremlin so the emotion rises into the mind then your mind activity is controlled by the old emotion of the pain body so you are not thinking the old emotion is using your mind thinking through you and using your mind renewing itself through your thought activity the vicious circle and that's where people get into that extremely negative self talk for a few hours whatever a day or a whole night what a dreadful night of talking to

yourself and more and more becoming more and more convinced how awful your life is or how dreadful some people around you are or were to you 20 years ago when it happened and you remember all these awful things whatever scenario the mind creates as long as it's of a negative kind then the energy of the pain body gets replenished the old emotion replenishes itself until it has done so efficiently and then it subsides and then you get a little bit of relief for a while until next time so if you live alone you don't have a partner then it will use your mind also some pain bodies use both they use your mind to feed on when your partner is not around or preferably use your partner to feed on it and so it's good to have an agreement again this is why we started to have an agreement with your partner when you are both conscious you can't enter the agreement when the other partner is already beginning to be in the grip of the pain body and then make that suggestion it's too late so if you have that agreement then I sometimes recommend to have a little sign that tells your partner that he or she may be coming in the grip of the pain body you notice it's starting in him or her and then you go oh well maybe this is not the right way it has to be something subtle maybe a word or whatever and there is no guarantee that that's going to work by the way because the agreement that you made with your partner when your partner was conscious will not necessarily apply anymore if your partner loses consciousness and this is how many people make agreements when they are relatively conscious and the person who breaks the agreement is not the person who made the agreement because the person who breaks the agreement is the person who is in the grip of certain mental emotional patterns this is how it happens, alcoholics they often create havoc in their families and then when they are sober again they say this was definitely the last time and I promise you on my life I promise you it is not going to happen again and of course they are totally sincere they totally mean that they are not trying to deceive you and yet it happens again but the person who made the promise that was there was some essence shining through awareness shining through the person and therefore the person was able to make that promise and then that essence becomes obscured when the addiction returns and the real being that made the promise the essence becomes so obscured that he or she isn't even there anymore so it's not that he or she breaks their agreements no, the essence becomes so obscured that the pattern then controls them and this is why it happens again and again and again and so whether or not it works helping your partner when you notice pain body arising we'll have to try it out and the most important thing obviously is to know it in yourself more difficult, self knowledge self observation requires more presence than the observation of somebody else you can observe easily when you observe somebody in conversation or whatever, how they get drawn into a mind stream and become totally identified with their mind stream and how they lose consciousness by trying to be right and so on, easy to observe in another but when it happens to you not so easy to be awake then and say, hmm, what's going on the stop technique, easy to apply to others but to oneself, not so easy but when it does happen, it's a wonderful step forward in the direction of fuller consciousness when it does happen, it's a wonderful thing when you can suddenly become aware of a pattern such as the pain body in

yourself or a certain mind pattern that is repetitive and causes you perhaps a lot of suffering some kind of negative self talk that tends to be repetitive in your mind about yourself or somebody close to you and you see how it makes you suffer you can feel the emotion that goes with it and at that moment you realize this is not a reality that is making me suffer what is making me suffer is not some reality what is making me suffer is my thoughts that is an enormous insight that on many, many, many majority of occasions what makes you suffer is not the event or whatever your thoughts tell you it's your thoughts that make you suffer and you can easily see that in a situation if you don't think that anymore about it the situation is quite neutral OK, he cheated me out of 5,000 dollars you can dwell on that and see how dreadful he is and most people are dishonest anyway and then become distrustful of everybody you meet from then onwards and all kinds of things that the mind gets into conclusions that become fixed ideas all kinds of unnecessary baggage and self-talk that you carry around that obscures the way in which you relate to others the way in which you perceive the world it's all mind baggage I call it huffing and puffing about stuff and it's nothing, it's just an event there it is, this is what happened and the suffering is in the thought and the emotional reaction to the thought rather than in the event in most cases I'm talking about psychological suffering if somebody injures you physically of course then there is pain we could call that suffering I use the word suffering as a psychological layer on top of what could be physical pain so many philosophers and so on have had that insight that it is not it's thinking that creates a lot of the suffering in humans which is psychological suffering on top of any physical suffering they may have so it's the psychological me entity that gets strengthened through the negative thought processes and you have to observe it in yourself in any situation where you feel upset or angry or anxious see what is it that creates the upset what is it that creates the anxiety what is it that creates the anger what is my mind what kind of thoughts is my mind producing and when you see that you a lot of the time you create your own suffering that's a wonderful insight and if you can be there in the moment when it happens that's the beginning of the end of those unconscious mind patterns and then you are no longer in the grip of them and gradually then awareness replaces habitual and compulsive identification with thinking always and it's patterns amazing realization so self observation is vital to have enough awareness so that you can know what kind of thoughts your mind is producing and even that millions of people still don't have that not enough awareness to know what kind of thoughts your mind is producing being totally in the grip of every thought that comes that occupies your mind and becomes part of the illusory self wherever it wants to take you amazing and that's of course the work of a teacher that some of you may be familiar with, Byron Katie her work consists mainly of looking at a thought that arises and asking yourself is that true, is that really true can I really know that this is true, that he's a jerk do I know that this is absolutely true and of course at first you might say, of course it's true but if you look more closely you can see well, there may be aspects to him that are not jerk not a jerk in some ways, my ex let's say my ex-husband, she says, he was such a jerk and he made my life, he created so much suffering and what he did the story goes on and on how do

you know that what you're saying is do you know that this is absolutely true what you're saying about if you look closely at a thought you see it's almost only a fragment and then you say, no, I don't know whether this is absolutely true or not so greatly her work helps you disidentify from thought and bring awareness in instead of following every thought where it wants to go where it wants to take you come with me, says the thought I'll show you a lovely place I can take you to and then you get hooked in and you follow it and then it pulls you in and before you know it your total attention is in there and you go off into dreamland which sometimes becomes a nightmare and then of course you create out of that unconscious state you create your reality that becomes the way through which you perceive situations in your life, around you the way through which you interpret other people totally distorting who they are through all the accumulated stuff in the mind getting a totally distorted view of others this is the human condition which could be summarized as lost in thought lost in thought so this has been the human condition up to recently, although there have been starting thousands of years ago already isolated individuals who saw the reality of that and then a few got it here and there there were pockets of awakening briefly here and there little pockets of awakening but it never became a widespread thing it's perhaps for the first time now that it can be a more widespread awakening in humanity and this is why this teaching and other associated teachings of a similar kind are so important the awakening is happening on the planet we don't need to ask now is everybody going to awaken, that seems very unlikely etc, etc, yes that's true but it's enough that you awaken because then everybody creates their own world so what we collectively call our collective reality is just the sum total of millions of individuals creating their own world you inhabit your world and the way in which you create your world that depends largely on your state of consciousness that's why you may remember the story that I told about the man coming into a new town asking the old man who was sitting there, what are the people like here and the old man says, well what were the people like where you used to live and so the first man who comes in says, they are all dreadful and then the man says, well here is much the same because the old man knows your state of consciousness determines what reality you perceive and experience and the next man, of course you may remember the next day comes, asks him, I want to move here, what are the people like again he asks, what were the people like where you lived before lovely people and the man says, very much the same here so I had a talk for ETTV just before coming here oh by the way, Stephen who just made an announcement before I came on said Eckhart created ETTV I'm sure you didn't believe that some dedicated people created it and all I do is just sit on a chair and then there is a camera and then I talk as you know I would not be capable of creating ETTV but I did a talk I had a dialogue with the actress Susan Sarandon in New York before coming here she is very open to the spiritual dimension and the first thing I asked her, why do you live in New York because she has lived most all her life I think in New York although she travels a lot and she says, I love the people here they are so open and so helpful and so alive and I love the energy and I heard many stories that the people are horrible from other people and she said the people are the

way you expect them to be and what you show them, they reflect back to you which is very true and also the little experience I have of New York is quite good so I enjoyed the intensity of energy and the little contact I had with people was good so again to a large extent your inner determines the outer especially as far as human interactions are concerned in extreme cases you cannot immediately go into a place of complete deep unconsciousness and insanity a place where there is continuous violence which is simply a magnified form of usual unconsciousness you cannot go into such a place and expect because you are there absolutely present that they are not going to shoot you well, it could happen that they don't shoot you it could be but the likelihood is that something negative will happen so you have to listen carefully to see where you go what energy field you go into and they are not horrible people they are just a little bit more a magnified version of normal insanity that's what it is so with the pain body then this is a very wonderful thing to realize that there is a pain body in you and then it becomes your little a challenging thing that helps you that pushes you into presence any challenge whether coming from within or without is actually helpful because without that we would go to sleep just look at movies when you see a movie you are interested because at the beginning or at some place close to the beginning of the movie something goes wrong and that determines then what happens but something has to go wrong I'm using a kind of generic expression on some level something must happen that is challenging to the protagonists, to the characters in the movie I call that something goes wrong and this is why you watch the movie if you watch a movie where nothing goes wrong you will go to sleep they are just a lovely family having breakfast together he goes to work, it's all harmonious gets home, then they go on a vacation go on a hike, the camera follows them everything is so wonderful two hours, everybody would be asleep and in your own life of course you complain when something goes wrong that it shouldn't happen the mind says this shouldn't be happening but of course it's a challenge and what works in the movie also works in real life because if it's a good movie then the protagonists the characters by facing the challenges undergo some inner transformation either they generate strength or energy that they didn't have before or they discover their egoic patterns they become, after going through turmoil and challenges in the end perhaps they become more fully human or they find compassion or whatever some change happens as a result of the characters facing challenges and so challenges are helpful there would be no spiritual awakening if you were not being challenged by whatever your challenges are so we can welcome in the words of Byron Katie loving what is that's a big one but let's start with accepting what is and perhaps then gradually that will take us to loving what is and just bring an acceptance to the present moment because what is must be happening now there's nothing else so loving what is is loving the present moment in whatever form and if you can't love it you can at least say well here it is and if you start arguing with it mentally that's the unnecessary baggage that's when thoughts get hold of you and it is that that creates whatever 80% or 90% of the suffering in your life is created by the mental baggage through which you approach situations and not by the situations themselves and it's a wonderful thing when

you encounter how often situations that happen that before would have been labelled as bad by the mind and you would have complained about them and difficult people and so on, the world is full of them as you know so how wonderful it is when you discover suddenly that you can be in a place of neutrality towards events and immediately accept that this person didn't do what he was supposed to do you paid the plumber \$200 and it's leaking again oh ok, it's leaking again so I think we'll get a different plumber and there's no complaint how dreadful plumbers are these days and you can't get anybody to do the right thing anymore and they're all really out to cheat you and the story goes on, simple this is the obstacle how can we go around it or transform it into something that works no reaction, no complaint just facing, this is accepting what is in action it doesn't make you into a passive person once you take action on the basis of acceptance you become very effective if you're in any business and you become free of reaction you become very effective in what you do because immediately a higher intelligence comes in which comes from presence the presence that is obscured whenever you get into a mental emotional reaction it obscures the higher or deeper intelligence that dwells in you which would be ready to act and live through you but it can't because the little me entity with its reactivity is lying there on top of it it says I'm going to control this situation I'm going to tell him what I think of him it can be very simple you look a moment of stillness there's an energy field and then you see what the situation requires and then you take action and you don't create every time you react from the conditioned mind the egoic mind, you create a further reaction in the other people with whom you are dealing so you strengthen their ego through your ego and then you get all the fighting that goes on but without it you don't strengthen the other person's ego the other person's ego exists suddenly in a kind of vacuum and he says he didn't react what's going on? it collapses without opposing it it very quickly collapses and then you can experience the miracle of sometimes unpleasant people suddenly showing that there's also a pleasant person hiding underneath but of course it's not a person a little bit of their essence shines through so this is the presence in action we started off with the pain body and of course that is still relevant what we are talking about have an agreement with your partner and even more importantly see if you can find on what occasions your pain body tends to arise when you lose yourself in the emotional negativity what is it that tends to trigger it and once you know that as a questioner yesterday said it was money and that's the case with many people because money is associated with fear and many pain bodies consist of fear fear of survival and so on and you can know as I already pointed out whenever you begin to deal with money you become very alert like you're walking on eggshells or something ok, now I'm going to call my bank manager and see what's going on and be very alert feel the energy field in your body and then talk from there or you you could even have a conversation with your partner to see when it is that we tend to have drama what particular situations pull us into unconsciousness it's an adventure it's the inner journey and it's a wonderful adventure and a highly interesting movie now in a bad movie things still go wrong but everything is resolved only on the external level nothing changes in the characters and the protagonists now those may be entertaining

too just entertaining, but there's no particular depth to them you can watch that there are some good action movies but there's no depth if what goes wrong does not produce a change in the character and of course in movies the possibilities movies can contribute also to an awakening because when you identify with a character identify means you become one with it if the script is good and the acting is good you become a little bit one with the character there is such a thing as you may remember from college suspension of disbelief it's a term that means when you watch something on stage or in the movies everybody knows that this isn't really happening but you voluntarily suspend your disbelief and then you pretend that this is happening and then you identify with the character that happens in a good movie or play to some extent also in literature when you read and if this character undergoes a transformation in consciousness it may be very minor but then a little bit of change happens in you also because you have identified with this character who then faced problems and challenges and through them either generated more power and aliveness or preferably became more conscious one way or another and then a little bit of that you take home with you then that stays with you there is a transformational element in certain movies and of course one of my favorites in that sense that most of you have seen it's about a little animal that creeps around here too and eats the grass groundhogs, groundhog day which can be summarized now in one sentence for those who haven't seen it it's about a character with a massive and huge ego who dislikes everything and everybody and he gets stuck in one day he wakes up every morning the same day and has to experience the same things and the same unpleasantness that of course he generates and he suffers, he tries to commit suicide several times and he does but he wakes up again the same morning until something in him shifts and it's not explained fortunately because in movies that doesn't work it has to be shown and the viewer has to draw his or her own conclusions and in the end he says he comes into an acceptance which means a complete transformation from what he was before he accepts, he becomes a force for good on that particular day that he is forced to repeat and everybody begins to love him in that town where he is stuck that he hated before and finally he says to the woman whom he experiences also every day oh, this is a great place let's stay here and the next morning he is free to go and it's only so only when he comes to complete acceptance then the shift happens that he doesn't even need anymore it's lovely, if you haven't seen it or you saw it years ago without perhaps fully understanding what it is about, then I recommend you watch it again let's see if there are any questions and we'll do it the same way as before we have one hand of fate in this section and another hand of fate who is the hand of fate in front you are the hand of fate oh, she's going away is there somebody behind also two people

[Speaker 7] (8:03:28 - 8:05:13)

thank you Eckhart for being such a wonderful teacher to me I've been in the path for decades and occasionally I kind of lost heart and I thought I would never make it and you

brought me so much closer to it and every time I listen to you, you do that so, thank you so much for that but that's not the question I know you are familiar with this quote because I think I heard you they said that democracy is the worst form of government except for all the other ones you quoted that that's one thing, the other thing is I get the feeling, although maybe it's just a thought that we're in the process of destroying the planet some people say it's too late already we overpopulated it, we polluted it and so, sometimes I like to think what is the solution to this problem so, somebody else said that the best form of government is an enlightened monarch and I was thinking and this is a little bit of a it's a little bit of a Dalai Lama kind of a question but I was thinking, suppose you were an enlightened monarch and you have absolute control of this little planet what would you do to try to save it and try to sort of lead us in the right direction sorry if it's kind of a

[Speaker 1] (8:05:28 - 8:06:17)

there have been occasionally in history as you mentioned, I'll come to the other main part of the question in a minute very rarely in history there have been a few that could be considered almost as enlightened rulers, monarchs or emperors but for example Marcus Aurelius, the Roman emperor who lived around 2000 years ago who wrote this wonderful book that is called Meditations which is really, was originally because it was never meant to be published with deep insights but unfortunately enlightened rulers have children who then become rulers and quite often the children of enlightened rulers are quite insane

[Speaker 7] (8:06:18 - 8:06:24)

I want to sort of maybe kind of I sort of know that, I want to suspend that part of that

[Speaker 1] (8:06:24 - 8:06:25)

I know, me too

[Speaker 7] (8:06:25 - 8:06:31)

suppose you were an enlightened ruler and you would last forever

[Speaker 1] (8:06:31 - 8:16:20)

yes so what would I do, that's the question I could not really do anything other than what I'm doing now which is transmit consciousness help becoming an opening for consciousness and that is then those people who are close to me and you are close to me here the consciousness is not transmitted but of course the same consciousness is in you it calls forth that awakening so the awakened state needs to spread into those close to you so the first thing I would then have some people close to me and make sure that they are relatively if not 100% awakened free of identification with mind and from there

they go on and have others so I would not try to do everything because you cannot impose enlightened government on a non-enlightened population it won't work you will immediately have a revolution it sounds wonderful for example prohibition they said alcohol is so harmful it does so much harm to people and we are still selling it to people they are destroying themselves through alcohol doesn't it make more sense to ban the sale of alcohol and of course yeah let's do that so we all know what happened during the time of prohibition so you cannot impose from above one would have to use force in many cases which would be counterproductive and it would lead to the opposite of what you wanted to create one can only spread consciousness to other humans who are then going to take action the consciousness the very basis for the transformation of the world is a shift in the individual consciousness if there are enough individuals that go through that shift then they no longer create the insanity that has been to a large extent human history until now they don't create the violence and the warfare and so on anymore but it starts with us here so I would not suggest that we look to another solution that is quicker than what is happening here you might say ok but do we have enough time to save the planet I believe there is an acceleration of awakening now and although there may be short term very serious problems coming to us challenges which will be part of a more massive awakening that's how I see it you already saw it on a smaller scale in the 60s there was quite an awakening as far as spirituality is concerned it kind of probably started in California and then into many other countries there was quite an awakening that was coincided with teachers from the east coming, meditation happening enormous things that weren't happening before but it all accelerated because of some huge so called bad thing that was the Vietnam war that was happening at the same time and so many youngsters withdrew their identification with the collective in the states here most strongly my country identifying with my country being proud of my country feeling you are one with my country and they suddenly found it very difficult to do that because they could see that their country was doing very insane things and so they withdrew and in the 50s in America everybody was still childlike almost everybody everybody was confident and optimistic we can do no wrong and of course they had the second world war the difference between right and wrong was more clear there than perhaps in any other war and the suffering generated by the Vietnam war and insanity accelerated the awakening partial awakening in many humans and I believe if it hadn't been for that awakening in the 60s we wouldn't even be here now and probably the power of now would not have been written because it's all connected it's a stream of awakening which sometimes becomes obscured again and then opens up again there are times when you think have they not learned anything when Iraq happened haven't they read history and even recent history so the only thing to save is consciousness it's not so much what to do there are countless humans who will be responsible for what to do there cannot ever be one human who tells everybody what to do because the world is extremely complex there are so many areas where action is taken so the decision making process cannot flow from one individual it would flow out there and meet innumerable obstacles and then what does the enlightened monarch do he says this and this and this needs to be

done and they refuse to do it because they don't realize that this is necessary so they refuse to do it what does the enlightened monarch do then you have to do it I force you to do it and the enlightened monarch becomes a dictator so it only works if the population there needs to be a certain percentage at least in the population of humans who embody if not a fully awakened state the awakening who are sane, just sane it's enough so there are sometimes politicians where you say compared to most others they look quite sane there was Gorbachev years ago in the Soviet Union and I heard even some people said oh is he enlightened but he looked like the Buddha because compared to him all his predecessors compared him to his predecessor he was like the Buddha because his predecessors were totally immersed in their collective mental conditioning and no matter what you feel or think about the current president and certain things that he should have done and could have done but didn't do this may all be true and of course I also ask myself can't he see that Afghanistan is not going to work ok there may be a pocket of unconsciousness in him but the general state of consciousness that he embodies is still far superior to almost any other politician that you see one can argue with many of the things that he does we don't know how much power he even has there are so many forces around him but when you observe the underlying state of consciousness there is still a non-reactivity there there is little ego that you see there is a facing what we have been talking about there is a facing a situation in a non-reactive way and seeing what is it that we can do about it and then he explains what it is that needs to be done so I still enjoy actually watching him in action because I can sense there is still this underlying consciousness more conscious than most it seems so perhaps this is the best that we can have at the moment it is a miracle that that is there that he is still there thank you ok the hand of fate I am not allowed to choose only the hand of fate do we need somebody here front also

[Speaker 3] (8:16:23 - 8:17:51)

hello I call you ET because you are from another planet and my question is about God I lost it and what I now see was a mental construct of mine coming from my very southern Spanish background Catholic is gone and nothing replaced it so I am wondering so I don't know if that is the reason why I am one of those compulsive doers and I think that my doing comes from my heart but I don't think if I think I find an empty hole there where my mental construct was so I don't even know who to pray to or what to pray to so that divine intelligence that the Christians say instead of creationism doesn't work I am a scientist as well so I don't believe that we wear a big band into all our complexities or soul or psyche I don't think it was just coming from the amoeba it is just not enough so that left me in a very confused state and I don't like to be confused because it is very confusing

[Speaker 1] (8:17:58 - 8:19:03)

it is a transitional stage you are leaving behind one particular state of consciousness that

perhaps was comfortable while it was there the belief that there is a God and it becomes of course a mental concept you believe that there is a God who controls events who has the power to do that and then of course the mind begins to question at some point and we have all the old famous dilemmas come up if there is a God who is omnipotent we have had this many times but this is how people gradually tend to lose their belief in an omnipotent God somewhere when they start thinking ok, if there is a God to be God, He, they usually call Him He

[Speaker 11] (8:19:03 - 8:19:05)

if there is...

[Speaker 1] (8:19:06 - 8:30:08)

yes, and a beard I think it has to grow a bit if there is a God He must be omnipotent because if He is not omnipotent He is not God ok, so we have sorted that out and then the next step the mind says if there is therefore an omnipotent God but He does not prevent the enormous amount of suffering that is happening on the planet then He is either indifferent to human suffering or maybe He is even enjoying it in which case He does not have the goodness that I would usually associate with God if He is a God, He must be both omnipotent and absolutely good and if He is omnipotent and absolutely good how is it that this omnipotent and absolutely good God allows all that evil to happen and all the suffering to happen this is the question that traditionally arises for humans who are beginning to step out of that very comfortable mindset which of course is upheld by the centuries of beliefs collective beliefs that humans have had and still represented by the church and so on as long as you have that belief then it is comfortable, you know where you belong it gives you a sense of a little bit of safety although it does not really free you from fear and then you begin to doubt you say, ok, absolute goodness and absolute power and yet He is allowing all this to happen and for many people this is how their traditional belief structure begins to crumble because they don't have an answer for that and when they go to the priest, the priest will say we cannot question the way God does things we just have to accept that this is what God does and yet it is hard, you can't do that with the mind you start thinking more and more and so of course there was the philosopher in the 19th century Nietzsche, the philosopher he shocked everybody when in one of his books he wrote God is dead of course it is a contradiction in terms if there is a God, God cannot be dead because God would be totally timeless and so on but what he meant was really the concept that we have created of that supreme being is dying that was the early stage then the mentally created concept this is about realising something within you that traditionally has been called the divine but it is also about giving up the belief that somewhere there is an entity that is the controlling giver of good as somewhere in space or time or wherever traditionally people look upwards when they look for God it must be somewhere and you grow out of that and you realise that all the religious people they venerate a mental

concept of God but they never touch, they never realise the reality of the divine and I'd like now to replace the word God with something else that is less confining because the word God immediately implies somebody and usually a male figure otherwise you have to say goddess and then he becomes female so God immediately implies an entity somewhere and people traditionally have even believed that God is very much like a human because it says somewhere in the Bible at the beginning God created man in his own image and people didn't understand the real meaning of that and they took it at a superficial level and therefore thought he must look like us and then they imagined this controlling entity looking like us like a human, like a man and then they thought if he looks like us he must have the same emotion that we do he gets angry and he's jealous and so then created out of their mind they created a God that they thought he gets angry and jealous the unconscious behaviour that humans exhibit they attribute also then to God and say oh you have to be careful because he has a bad temper so they create out of their very limited understanding they created a mental construct but throughout while these things were happening throughout there were certain individuals who realised that there is a reality to what we call God that is far deeper than any of those images that we have created and they realised it within themselves and there was a teacher 2,500 years ago in India who later was called the Buddha the one who is awake and he was born into what was already a Hindu culture Hinduism is older than Buddhism so he came out of Hinduism which had belief in God less limited by the way than the Christian belief but with limitations too with a heavy mythology they asked him is there a God? they asked the Buddha please tell us because they realised the Buddha was a deep presence there and the thing is the Buddha never answered that question and in the scriptures it says he kept noble silence I am going to give a bit more of an answer than the Buddha but the Buddha kept noble silence he didn't say there is a God and he didn't say there is no God and there is a wonderful depth in that because it is only when you go into the deeper levels of your being that you realise that what traditionally is called God that you are actually an extension in form, a limited form that which animates you the consciousness that expresses itself for a very short time as that particular human being in that particular physical form in that particular psychological form the consciousness that animates that without which you could not exist that consciousness is one could say an emanation of the one source consciousness that is at the core or the source of the entire universe that has no location of course in space or time is the unmanifested which means it does not manifest in the world of form it is the eternal, timeless, unmanifested source of all consciousness and all life, life and consciousness are the same very much compared to the sun the sun could be you could compare although the sun has a location in space and time so it's not the sun, it's just we can give an analogy it gives of itself and you could then say every life form is animated by the light of the sun so the consciousness that you are not the thought forms but that which makes the thoughts possible is an emanation of that one underlying consciousness which is continuously born into short lived life forms and seems to for some reason enjoy that so there is not we are here to realize that even if we only get a

glimpse of it we become free of the image of a controlling entity which really that is like humans that belongs to a more childlike stage in human evolution that kind of image so you are leaving that behind so instead of believing in God you are beginning to sense in yourself you got it but for those who hadn't got it yet laughter laughter laughter instead of believing in God which is a workings of the mind you step deeper into yourself and you can sense your essential reality as a presence yes, a divine presence the emanation from the one source you transcend the personality and you sense that in yourself that cannot really be named anymore because you realize when you name it that is definitely not it so you lose your belief in God and you begin to find the reality of God in yourself

[Speaker 3] (8:30:10 - 8:30:16)

so even if I screw up I can always tap into it again

[Speaker 1] (8:30:16 - 8:31:47)

yes, when you screw up then you see what you did from that place of consciousness what in colloquial terminology is called screw up means you act unconsciously and humans have been doing that throughout history that is why history is screwed up laughter so we act as we connect more to the transpersonal the transcendent dimension within ourselves we screw up less and the more that begins to live through us the less suffering we create suffering we otherwise create for ourselves and for others look at tradition if you look at the history of just Christianity middle ages created a lot of suffering in the name of God they tortured people in the name of God they believed in God it was an absurd form of insanity so here we are this is the next stage in the evolution of consciousness now you feel a little bit it's a little bit like a child that's growing up and feels a little bit sorry about losing childhood that's you yes

[Speaker 3] (8:31:50 - 8:31:52)

thank you, you might have saved my life

[Speaker 1] (8:31:52 - 8:31:58)

laughter applause applause

[Speaker 8] (8:32:14 - 8:33:21)

hello I've had some thoughts and when you said this morning I don't really have a question as much it's just something I wanted to share and that is that in your ETTV and I have not seen it and I'm not sure where it's going but I would love to see awareness television you're talking about children with devices where is that all going and how can we turn the internet or television into something more meaningful I would love to see we have a big screen TV over my fireplace that looks like I'm there and if I could just see animals and no documentary, I don't need to know I don't need to see them fighting I

just want to see them, observe them and a church, when you said a church I was thinking the exact same thing an empty church there are so many things I wish we could see I don't need to be there, I'm not going to go to Africa but I would love to just look in the eyes of an animal that I'll never get the chance to see

[Speaker 1] (8:33:22 - 8:33:39)

peaceful images appearing in your living room a succession of peaceful images nature, animals maybe beautiful, serene buildings, temples, churches

[Speaker 8] (8:33:39 - 8:33:54)

and it could even be downtown New York if that's something I would choose I want to just look and watch that with nothing but hearing the sounds and just to focus on improving my awareness I think it would just be a great thing

[Speaker 1] (8:33:54 - 8:34:51)

I was a few months ago in a hotel I don't remember where and there was a channel in the hotel television that was actually on when I came into the room for the first time and that channel was showing beautiful landscapes it changed every 15 seconds or 20 seconds or so and so all this beauty appeared a lake, mountains, trees nature usually, very often when you come into a hotel room the TV is actually on, sometimes it's the hotel channel usually the first thing I do when I go into a hotel room I switch off the TV if it's on but this time I didn't switch it off and I left it on for an hour because it was so pleasant perhaps you can create that

[Speaker 8] (8:34:51 - 8:35:02)

my other issue is I'm a bit of a frequency holder so I was hoping if I put it up there laughter laughter

[Speaker 1] (8:35:02 - 8:35:32)

laughter well I'm not a doer either because as I said I didn't create E.T. TV either but I know somebody who is a doer her name is Oprah I will see her on Friday in Chicago I may just briefly mention it with just one sentence just put a thought into her head and see what happens

[Speaker 11] (8:35:36 - 8:35:37)

thank you

[Speaker 1] (8:35:53 - 8:44:08)

thank you for doing all that you do my question is about how does one pay attention to

the future while making choices and everything around you is changing constantly the future of course you need to consider on a practical level where you make plans or you project a timeline and you can write these things or do it on a computer screen but that has its place and you're not losing yourself in the future but you're giving your fullest attention to what you're doing in the present moment let's say you know what it is that you want to achieve in a certain course of action I want to achieve whatever do you have a business or what is your occupation I'm a life coach life coach, good, well that's a very good occupation giving your fullest attention provided that you know what it is that you want and what it is that you want is really what is it that one wants to manifest through me we talked about this yesterday the true question is not so much what is it that I want but what is it that wants to come through me what is it that wants to be born through me into this world and so you have to look at that in the present moment that's not dwelling on future and then you might get a realization not perhaps immediately of where you want to take your life your so-called life your external life okay, let's say I want to create you're a life coach so who knows, maybe you're happy doing what you're doing and you continue doing that or you might feel something wants to I want to create a retreat center where people can spend some time and learn about how to live for example, that might arise and then you look at what is the next what is the first step that is required you focus on it the focusing itself is an important part of manifesting you focus on the vision which is all present moment you don't focus on I want to achieve that at some future point you hold the vision in your mind which is all present moment and you hold the vision in your mind as if it were already a reality and this is an important part Jesus briefly talked about that too he said when you pray for something, feel as if you already had it and that's of course when you read books about manifestation the good ones will also tell you that the most powerful thing when you want to manifest something in the so-called future is to feel that it's already there so what would it feel like to have this healing center where people come, just an example the healing center where people come spend time and learn how to live consciously and you can feel you can feel already the fullness of that it feels good so you are not doing it in order to feel better about yourself or about life when you finally achieve it the creation needs to come from a sense of fullness in yourself and not from a sense of neediness of insufficiency or of lack I need to have that to feel happy and fulfilled or get recognition manifestation comes from a place of fullness and when that place of fullness Jesus also he used the expression the fullness of life he said I want you to have the fullness of life that seems to be a contradiction to what the Buddha talked about the essence of life as emptiness and if you look at the surface only of words then of course if you are a scholar you say they talk about the exact opposite, Jesus says fullness and the Buddha says I want you to realize emptiness and of course they are talking about the same no thing, exactly the same no thing from a different perspective because the emptiness is the unmanifested source of all forms which already contains everything in itself in that emptiness so it's just another word for it there is no contradiction whatsoever when you feel empty there is an intense field of aliveness in that emptiness that has no form it's just vast spaciousness and in

that you don't need anything, you don't need the healing center but you might enjoy creating it it may want to be created through you and out of that joyful realization of that presence that the fullness of life you begin to take action talk to this person and you may find when you are tuned in in that way you often get approached with just the right you meet just the right person at the right moment or the right synchronistic you run into somebody and say as happened to me when I mentioned yesterday after giving a talk to a class at University of California I suddenly realized it would be wonderful to reach more it's so satisfying to reach all these youngsters they are much more open than I realized I thought they had to suffer a bit more before they would be open but many of them are actually open and I thought it would be good to teach to talk to more of them and a few days later I got an email from Yale that's a strange coincidence I haven't had an email in years from places like that that's beautiful and I got it personally I got very few emails how it reached me I don't remember, somebody must have given somebody a phone number my email address it's very strange but it's beautiful and when you are tuned in in that way coincidences seem to happen to support what you are doing and when it does happen it feels it's a kind of confirmation that this is the right path it's more than what I want to do it's what the greater whole wants to do and from there you are present moment centered you have the vision but now in the meantime every action you take will be just one step at a time towards the vision and you know very well that when you achieve your vision you are not going to be any happier than you are now

[Speaker 4] (8:44:22 - 8:44:55)

Thank you Vielen Dank my question has to do with location you spoke this morning about the energy field in western North America you had to come there in order to have that book getting out of you and I have been living in New York City 14 years

[Speaker 1] (8:44:55 - 8:44:58)

which is full of nice people

[Speaker 4] (8:45:03 - 8:46:17)

all kinds of people and I had in April I teach yoga and in April I had a sudden ending of many classes and I had, I can't even say it's a thought I can't even say if it's a thought or a feeling but I have lately coming up in my consciousness you need to go, your time is over here but I don't know if it's too much a mind, an egotistical thought that I want to go somewhere to get something because now I am challenged with the situation even though I have been right now I am having the best time in my life it's the best moment of my life right now right here, it's wonderful, it's amazing and this loss is not a loss it's a gain because I have discovered something of the dimension of being I am very grateful but I am not sure if I need to go somewhere to be more useful to be more given

[Speaker 1] (8:46:17 - 8:46:24)

so right now you are still in New York where are you living?

[Speaker 4] (8:46:24 - 8:46:25)

Manhattan

[Speaker 1] (8:46:28 - 8:52:37)

and so as you deepen now and perhaps this being here has contributed to a deepening in you see if you still feel that when you go back and pay attention to how you feel about the energy field of Manhattan when a deepening happens often places that before we thought we can't possibly be here they become okay but not necessarily the deeper you are the more the easier it will be for you to know whether or not it is right for you to continue to live there there was a time very similar in my life to what you just described for many years I lived in London and a time came when something within me no longer seemed to be aligned with the energy field of that big city it just as if there was a shrinking back I could feel it energetically inside as a kind of shrinking whenever I went out into the traffic and the subway and the masses of people but for many years I enjoyed London but the time came when something didn't feel right anymore and that feeling continued and then finally I realized I have to leave I was seeing I lived on very little then I was seeing people who would come for counseling occasionally and I got into my old car and I drove out into the countryside looking for somewhere that felt right and I reached Somerset the county of Somerset and for some strange reason I reached this strange town called Glastonbury which is an alternative center where lots of spiritual people and weird people in other words people like myself they visit there they live there so it's very much unlike any other town in England except perhaps one or two that are a little bit similar Totnes in Devon is a gentler form of Glastonbury and there my car broke down and I could never use it again after that and so that's where I then began to live of course first I had to catch a train back to London and get rid of everything so that took a few months but that's where the car broke down and that's where it felt right at the time to be there it happened to be quite a magical place in many ways with spirituality that goes back to pre-Christian times it's been a spiritual center and a place of healing for thousands of years going back to pre-Christian religion and so that's how it happened in my case so I finally went but the realization whether you need to leave it may come to you something coming into your life that also tells you where to go you may not necessarily have to go into your car and wait for it to break down because your car is probably better than the one I had and it may take a long time before it breaks down so see what it feels like as you return now with more presence and more awakened consciousness see what it feels like now or if the feeling continues that it doesn't feel right to be there then you can focus on begin to see where is it that I might want to live where does it feel right do I already know a place somebody may bring something to you some bit of information mention a place, invite you somewhere come and spend a few days here somebody says in that way it may happen for you but cannot predict in what

way or you may feel compelled to go somewhere that you have heard of or you might feel good about nobody can predict how you will be taken out if that's meant to be for you how you will be taken out don't so I asked myself when I was walking along the streets of Manhattan a few days ago whether I could live here and I said yes I could yes I had to ask Laura

[Speaker 4] (8:52:39 - 8:53:06)

is there a difference from a spiritual point of view or from becoming aware in the fields of energy that are supporting awakening more than other places so that's part of the question is there on the west coast of the United States is there more support to awaken than on the east coast

[Speaker 1] (8:53:06 - 8:54:05)

yes, this depends on the individual there is no way of saying that this particular place is for everybody, would be more conducive to spirituality than another person it might be the opposite coming back to London, all my spiritual transformation and the shift in consciousness, it all happened in London so I cannot say that London is not conducive to spiritual realization it's a powerful place in many ways there is a powerful energy field there and it's closely related to my spiritual path both before the awakening happened and after and the awakening itself happened in northwest London and yet a time came years later when it no longer felt right to be there, it doesn't mean that for other people it's not absolutely right to be there

[Speaker 2] (8:54:28 - 8:56:26)

first of all thank you for this book obviously it's not read at all in 2008 this was a huge puzzle for my awakening the journey with Oprah and yourself so thank you so much my question has to do with how you mentioned nature and how it compels us in and how we actually reflect its own beauty through us observing it and I wonder if the same parallel can be drawn through us as humans without ego also when you mentioned specialness and uniqueness I'm trying to sort those all out because I feel like we also perhaps without ego being involved can draw or perhaps feel compelled to draw people so that they can also see the beauty in us and there's an analogy I wonder if I could offer perhaps help me there is a field of flowers and perhaps poppies and there are some flowers who strive to be taller healthier and the bee then goes to those flowers and proliferates the field with those flowers isn't it then in some ways okay for the human men to strive to be its best and then it proliferates the consciousness of humanity or is this considered egoic

[Speaker 1] (8:56:28 - 8:59:04)

okay well in the same way that when you contemplate a tree or a flower you reflect back

to the tree its own beauty and sacredness and aliveness so the tree through you becomes conscious of itself in the same way I don't know if that's the answer to exactly your question you can reflect back to another human their own reality who they are beyond the ego when you meet another human with another human whether it's a brief encounter or whether there is more of a relationship you can reflect back to them who they are beyond ego by yourself being more of a presence than a person when you are with them we already know what that means being more of a presence than a person in the presence of another human with another human means as you look at this human or listen to what they say there is a spaciousness in you in addition to perhaps having some thoughts about the other human occasionally perhaps not even that there is a spaciousness in you through which you look at the other human you give them that space and this means you reflect back to them who they are beyond ego and this is what happens here I am not here as a person it would be absurd for this person to think that you had come here to see me I mean, what for? you don't want to see the window frame you want to see the light that comes through the window you are not interested in the frame so nobody comes to see a window frame but people love the light that shines through which is the unconditioned consciousness so if I ever thought people came to see me that would be a very stressful thought so they want the spaciousness because it is a reflection of who they are in their essence so this is what happens here but everyone, am I answering your question?

[Speaker 2] (8:59:05 - 8:59:19)

yes, but doesn't the garment that we wear and the window frame have some essence as well doesn't it have a purpose doesn't it have something without ego yes, doesn't it have a place in itself

[Speaker 1] (8:59:19 - 9:00:04)

the form is honored also in that presence you honor the form of that human there is the physical form there is the makeup of their personality you don't say get out of the way no, it's acknowledged that is there also that's the form and the form is shining through the form so in many ways the things that you talk about are of the level of form usually with the other human so both levels are acknowledged if this is not the full answer ask me again

[Speaker 2] (9:00:05 - 9:00:34)

I guess because I feel that in some ways we focus of course on the essence and I understand that and I wonder if when I look at nature and I don't feel there is also anything wrong with encompassing the physical form and the essence they are not really separate

[Speaker 1] (9:00:35 - 9:02:57)

what we call beauty is a combination of the form and that which animates the form shining through the form without the form it wouldn't be there so it's a combination ultimately the two are together as the ancient Buddhist texts tell us form and emptiness, emptiness and form they are really one so it's not really a duality you actually love the form as you reflect back the essence you also love their form I love the human form I love sitting in a cafe and looking at all the humans that come and go and sit there and contemplate the multiplicity of the human form it's beautiful or wherever in big cities talking about New York and the humans that inhabit New York not only is there the multiplicity of races and all ethnic backgrounds from all parts of the world it's quite a unique thing quite a unique place and they all come there and they all participate in this high intensity energy field everybody has some important business to do and they're all running around and they create this high intensity and I found it very enjoyable actually I felt like floating in a sea of energy as I was walking along the streets Madison Avenue almost being carried by this no thought in my head just loving all these forms energy forms it's quite beautiful you can only really love the form when you are in touch with that which is deeper than form if you're not in touch with that which is deeper than form you don't really love the forms that you see you either fear them or you want something from them but you're only free to love them when you are in touch with that which is beyond form and from there you can love the forms

[Speaker 2] (9:02:58 - 9:03:01)

I feel that you're right then it becomes a celebration

[Speaker 1] (9:03:02 - 9:03:33)

a celebration of the multiplicity of life maybe one or two one more depending on the length of the answer we have some more questions tomorrow so don't despair and if your question is not answered tomorrow then of course you go to the best place where to receive an answer which is within, in the stillness

[Speaker 5] (9:03:35 - 9:03:40)

first of all thank you very much it meant a lot to me my son actually introduced me to you

[Speaker 1] (9:03:41 - 9:03:47)

how old is your son? 26 good work

[Speaker 5] (9:03:55 - 9:04:23)

so I guess my question is yesterday you mentioned and you talked about it today too, pain body and yesterday living a life of fear with the world the way it is and the economy the way it is a lot of people are gripped in fear and so you talked about being gripped in

thought and so I was wondering how do you deal with the grip of fear and what's the best approach to take to get out of that grip of fear and become aware and productive

[Speaker 1] (9:04:23 - 9:04:33)

do you experience that from time to time? are there particular occasions when you feel it most strongly?

[Speaker 5] (9:04:33 - 9:04:35)

yes

[Speaker 1] (9:04:40 - 9:17:00)

an interesting starting point is to see what the relationship is between certain thoughts that you think and the emotion of fear to see are there certain thoughts that I think when you feel the fear look at your mind what thoughts is my mind creating right now what are the thoughts telling me what kinds of thoughts are floating around in my mind and you may find that there are thoughts concerning the future some possible future scenario something about yourself at some point and you may find that a lot of that fear is not created by a situation you find yourself in unless you're facing a dog that's about to attack you but that probably happens rarely or you're in some place and you're about to fall off the ledge this is actual fear in the presence of imminent danger but I assume you are not you're not a soldier I was in the Marine Corps the Marines as you know if you're in an actual battle situation then there may or may not be fear perhaps in the immediacy of battle you're forced into such presence there's no fear or there may be fear but if there is fear there then that is not what we call psychological fear that is an instinctive reaction to imminent danger but what you're facing now I assume is not an instinctive reaction to immediate danger it's a fear that lives in you and first thing to discover whether you are creating it at any given time by certain thoughts that your mind is producing at that moment you may find maybe you know the answer already right now or maybe you have to wait until the fear rises again and then look at it because it's surprising how often humans are not even aware of what kinds of thoughts they are thinking that even happened to me when the shift happened this is just aside from I'll come back in a second when the shift in consciousness happened and I suddenly felt so peaceful and I didn't know why the present was so enjoyable but I didn't even call it the present I just said peace, it's so peaceful and everything was so lovely and that was of course in London and I could walk around the center of London and find everything so peaceful and only later I discovered when I talked to a monk a Zen monk who said well Zen is really about the cessation of the thinking mind I thought oh, now I understand why I feel so peaceful because ever since it happened I haven't been thinking that much and there's actually vast spaces in me of no thought, of just perception but I didn't even realize that that's what it was I didn't perceive it as the absence of thinking, I perceived it as peace so you could say I didn't really know what

was going on in my mind and suddenly I realized all the peace is associated with the cessation of thinking but no loss of consciousness whereas usually the cessation of thinking is associated with loss of consciousness when you stop thinking you go so observe whether your mind is creating certain thoughts that create the emotion of fear then it is also possible that the fear lives in you as an accumulation of old emotion and that from time to time it comes up and creates fearful thoughts so there is always a relationship between the emotion and the thoughts so make sure that the link between the thoughts and the emotion of fear is broken, severed and you do it by becoming aware of the fear when you feel it indirectly in yourself as an energy vibration one could say, whatever it feels, it's hard to describe because you can't see it you feel it in yourself, it's somewhere in the body it affects the body and feel it rather than allow it to arise into your mind and give rise to thinking but be aware to see whether whenever you feel it whether that is perhaps the result of certain types of thoughts in your head so in other words are you creating the fear that you feel by your thoughts which is the case for many humans or, which can also happen is there an accumulation of fear in you that goes back to the past that from time to time you feel more strongly than at other times, it comes up and it then tends to go into the mind and lead to fearful thoughts so it can be thought creating fear or fear living in there perhaps going back many years in your life and from time to time but usually some link happens then with your thinking and that link needs to be cut which is not a violent process at all which is a very gentle thing you do it simply by being the space for the fear to feel it and to accept that right now this is what you feel now this might seem not very helpful to say I accept that right now this is what I feel, but what it does is when you accept whatever you feel right now it creates this acceptance that you bring to it implies there is an awareness suddenly around it it's a space of awareness that then begins to surround the fear, that's what acceptance does so in the same way that you accept because whatever arises in the present moment whatever arises in the now externally you might as well say yes to it because undoubtedly there it is it is what is in the present moment so you might as well say yes if you don't say yes to it it's a form of insanity almost but it's quite normal to argue with what is the same applies internally, what arises internally you can't deny that there is fear and if you say go away, it won't work so what does work is to say ok, there it is, I can feel it and by being the awareness around it which comes through acceptance acceptance means you kind of step back you are not totally in the grip anymore you step back from the fear so to speak internally and suddenly there is an aware space around it which we call acceptance and so the fear continues but when you then are conscious of it you hold it in that field of consciousness it cannot renew itself by using your mind and thinking fearful thoughts and in that way whenever you feel the fear arising accept it that this is what is right now you don't even need to call it fear anymore you just feel what it feels like and accept that kind of feeling it's a strange frequency and you may then find if you do it often enough that gradually the energy that was trapped in that fear becomes freed and you feel more alive because when the energy sometimes an enormous amount of energy is trapped in a person's fear and when that is freed that

very same energy that was trapped there becomes part of your sense of aliveness and actually fuels your conscious presence so you don't need to want it to go away anybody can experience that even people who are maybe not burdened by excessive fear normally when there is anxiety or something like that let's say you have to give a public talk and many people are anxious beforehand stage fright because they are projecting themselves mentally into that situation and it's very problematic because it's not happening now how are they going to receive me?

what am I going to say? are they going to like what I say? what if and so on when you feel anxious and you become totally present with the anxiety so that it's not using your mind anymore you just feel the anxiety and accept it completely then it can often happen that the anxiety becomes high intensity energy and you suddenly go from suddenly go from so fear when it's totally accepted can sometimes quickly become transmuted into intense aliveness so the way then beyond it is the acceptance of it hold it in that space of consciousness and feel it fully don't fuel it with your thinking and be very careful so that when your mind creates more of it by thinking certain thoughts that you need to recognize that is called dysfunctional thinking which is usually associated with projecting some kind of future because obviously there is nothing to fear at this very moment but there may be something tomorrow to the mind so see what your mind is creating how that contributes to the fear it may contribute a lot or it may be that the fear lives in you but either case if it's your mind make sure that you recognize the futility and the dysfunction of those thought patterns and then take your attention into simply feeling what you feel so don't create more of it by unconscious thinking observe if that is the case observe how your thinking creates more fear more fear, more fear and so good luck that's your spiritual practice everybody has their tailor made spiritual practice and that is an important part of your spiritual practice

[Speaker 5] (9:17:00 - 9:17:08)

and the second part of the question is how do you deal with regrets you talk about the present moment a lot of people deal with regrets as well

[Speaker 1] (9:17:08 - 9:30:12)

yes, so fear is usually associated with thoughts concerning some projected future and regret is associated with thoughts concerning something that happened in the past and in either case you are identified with those thoughts and you take them to be virtually reality you don't recognize that those thoughts are simply thoughts when you are identified you believe the thought is a reality so when you regret something your mind is formulating a certain story an interpretation of certain events that happened in the past you did something that perhaps you think was wrong you know now that it was wrong but at the time you did not know that otherwise you wouldn't have done it that would be called guilt which is also related to regret but these are all thought forms that perpetuate

the past in your mind and they are imbued with a sense of self anybody that has guilt which is associated related to regret, it's not quite the same but it's related to regret guilt means there was something in the past that you feel you did and that you realize now that was wrong to do perhaps it created suffering for other humans it was wrong you realize it now because now there is a consciousness there that wasn't there at the time this action happened so at that time you were in the grip of unconsciousness compared to what you are now and to personalize that actually creates more ego you have to forgive yourself in the same way that Jesus pointed to on the cross when he said forgive them for they know not what they do sometimes you have to say I forgive myself for I did not know what I was doing when Jesus said they do not know what they do in our terminology that we use here he would have said don't hold it against them because they are completely unconscious that's what he meant they are completely unconscious if you forgive yourself I was unconscious then I was in the grip of certain emotional mental streams and there was not enough presence in me to act otherwise recognizing that this happened because you didn't know what you were doing that is part of the forgiveness and there is no self essentially in it, who you essentially are has nothing to do with that it does not mean that sometimes people still have to undergo karmic retribution for certain things but there is no sense anymore that I, who I essentially am did that, no let's now, thank you let's now go a little bit more silence and we have more questions tomorrow unless they have all dissolved dissolved in the stillness I got mail welcome again wherever you are, here or elsewhere we are in the tropics now that may slow you down a little which is a good thing there is a Zen saying which goes hurry slowly but what that really means is not that you necessarily slow down on the external you can both be fast on the internal and be still on the inside I briefly mentioned that before at some point and then of course you are not stressed you are still very effective in fact more effective and yet there is always that still core that still space if it has to be fast you can move fast there was a Greek ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus